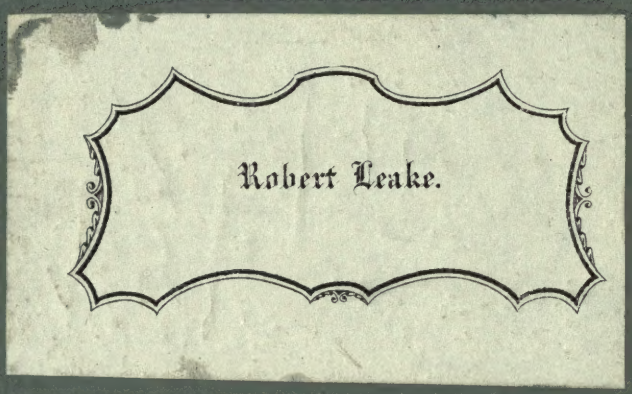

Robert Leake.

"*The Story of our Lives from Year to Year.*"—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

NEW SERIES.

VOLUME I.

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WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 1. NEW SERIES. | SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1868. | PRICE TWOPENCE.

TO THE PUBLIC.

A very unjustifiable paragraph has appeared in some newspapers, to the effect that I have relinquished the Editorship of this Publication. It is not only unjustifiable because it is wholly untrue, but because it must be either wilfully or negligently untrue, if any respect be due to the explicit terms of my repeatedly-published announcement of the present New Series under my own hand.

CHARLES DICKENS.

WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER I. MORIBUND.

"I SAY! Old Ashurst's going to die! I heard old Osborne say so. I say, Hawkes, if Ashurst does die, we shall break up at once, shan't we?"

"I should think so! But that don't matter much to me; I'm going to leave this term."

"Don't I wish *I* was, that's all! Hawkes, do you think the governors will give old Ashurst's place to Joyce?"

"Joyce?—that snob! Not they, indeed! They'll get a swell from Oxford, or somewhere, to be head master; and I should think he'll give Master Joyce the sack."

Little Sam Baker, left to himself, turned out the pocket of his trousers, which he had not yet explored, found a half-melted acidulated drop sticking in one corner, removed it, placed it in his mouth, and enjoyed it with great relish. This refection finished, he leaned his little arms over the park-paling of the cricket-field, where the above-described colloquy had taken place, and surveyed the landscape. Immediately beneath him was a large meadow, from which the hay had been just removed, and which, looking brown and bare and closely shorn as the chin of some retired Indian civilian, remained yet fragrant from its recent treasure. The meadow sloped down to a broad, sluggishly-flowing stream, unnavigated and unnavigable, where the tall green flags, standing breast-high, bent and nodded gracefully, under the influence of the gentle summer breeze, to the broad-leaved water-lilies couchant below them. A notion of scuttling across the meadow and having "a bathe" in a sequestered part of the stream, which he well knew, faded out of little Sam Baker's mind before it was half formed. Though a determined larker and leader in mischief among his coevals, he was too chivalrous to take advantage of the opportunity which their chief's illness gave him over his natural enemies, the masters. Their chief's illness. And little Sam Baker's eyes were lifted from the river and fixed themselves on a house about a quarter of a mile further on—a low-roofed, one-storeyed, red-brick house, with a thatched roof and little mullioned windows, from one of which a white blind was fluttering in the evening breeze.

"That's his room," said little Sam Baker to himself. "Poor old Ashurst! He wasn't half a bad old chap; he often let me off a hundred lines; he——poor old Ashurst!" And two large tears burst from the small boy's eyes and rolled down his cheeks.

The boy was right. Where the white blind fluttered was the dominie's bedroom, and there the dominie lay dying. A gaunt, square, ugly room, with panelled walls, on which the paint had cracked and rubbed and blistered, with such furniture as it possessed old fashioned, lumbering, and mean, with evidence of poverty everywhere —evidence of poverty which a woman's hand had evidently tried to screen and soften without much effect. The bed, its well-worn red moreen curtains with a dirty yellow border having been tightly bound round each sculptured post for the admittance of air, stood near the window, on which its occupant frequently turned his glazed and sunken eyes. The sun had gone to rest, the invalid had marked its sinking, and so had those who watched him. The same thought had occurred to all, though not a word had been spoken; but the roseate flush which he leaves behind still lingered in the heavens, and, as if in mockery, gave momentarily to the dying man's cheek a bright healthy hue, such as he was destined never to wear in life again. The flush grew fainter, and faded away, and then a glance at the face, robbed of its artificial glory, must have been conclusive as to the inevitable result. For the cheeks were hollow and sunken, yellowish-white in colour, and cold and clammy to the touch; the eyes, with scarcely any fire left in them, seemed set in large bistre rings; the nose was thin and pinched, and the bloodless lips were tightly compressed with an expression of acute pain.

The Reverend James Ashurst was dying. Every one in Helmingham knew that, and nearly every one had a word of kindness and commiseration for the stricken man, and for his wife and daughter. Dr. Osborne had carried the news up to the Park several days previously, and Sir Thomas had hemmed and coughed and said, "Dear me," and Lady Churchill had shaken her head piteously, on hearing it. "And nothing much to leave in the way of——eh, my dear doctor?" It was the doctor's turn to shake his head then, and he solaced himself with a large pinch of snuff, taken in a flourishing and sonorous manner, before he replied that he believed matters in that way were much worse than people thought; that he did not believe there was a single penny—not a single penny: indeed, it was a thing not to be generally talked of, but he might mention it in the strictest confidence to Sir Thomas and my lady, who had always proved themselves such good friends to the Ashursts—that was, he had mentioned to Mrs. Ashurst that there was one faint hope of saving her husband's life, if he would submit to a certain operation which only one man in England, Godby, of St. Vitus's Hospital in London, could perform. But when he had mentioned Godby's probable fee—and you could not expect these eminent men to leave their regular work and come down such a long distance under a large sum—he saw at once how the land lay, and that it was impossible for them to raise the money. Miss Ashurst—curious girl that, so determined and all that kind of thing—had indeed pressed him so hard that he had sent his man over to the telegraph office at Brocksopp with a message, inquiring what would be Godby's exact charge for running down —it was a mere question of distance with these men, so much a mile and so much for the operation—but he knew the sum he had named was not far out.

From the Park Dr. Osborne had driven his very decorous little four-wheeler to Woolgreaves, the residence of the Creswells, his other great patients, and there he had given a modified version of his story, with a very much modified result. For old Mr. Creswell was away in France, and neither of the two young ladies was of an age to feel much sympathy, unless with their intimate relations, and they had been educated abroad, and seen but little of the Helmingham folk; and as for Tom Creswell, he was the imp of the school, having all Sam Baker's love of mischief without any of his good heart, and would not have cared who was ill or who died, provided illness or death afforded occasion for slacking work and making holiday. Every one else in the parish was grieved at the news. The rector—bland, polished, and well endowed with worldly goods—had been most actively compassionate towards his less fortunate brother; the farmers, who looked upon "Master Ashurst" as a marvel of book learning, the labourers who had consented to the removal of the village sports, held from time immemorial on the village green, to a remote meadow whence the noise could not penetrate to the sick man's room, and who had considerately lowered the matter as well as the manner of their singing as they passed the school-house at night in jovial chorus; all these people pitied the old man dying, and the old wife whom he would leave behind. They did not say much about the daughter; when they referred to her it was generally to the effect

that she would manage tolerably well for herself, for "she were a right plucked 'un, Miss Marian were."

They were right. It needed little skill in physiognomy to trace, even under the influence of the special circumstances surrounding her, the pluck, and spirit, and determination in every feature of Marian Ashurst's face. They were patent to the most ordinary beholder; patent in the brown eye, round rather than elongated, small yet bright as a beryl; in the short sharply curved nose, in the delicately rounded chin, which relieved the jaw of a certain fulness, sufficiently characteristic, but scarcely pretty. Variety of expression was Marian's great charm; her mobile features acting under every impulse of her mind, and giving expression to her every thought. Those who had seen her seldom, or only in one mood, would scarcely have recognised her in another. To the old man, lying stretched on his death-bed, she had been a fairy to be worshipped, a plaything to be for ever prized. In his presence the brown eyes were always bright, the small, sharp, white teeth gleamed between the ripe, red lips, and one could scarcely have traced the jaw, that occasionally rose rigid and hard as iron, in the soft expanse of the downy cheek. Had he been able to raise his eyes, he would have seen a very different look in her face as, after bending over the bed and ascertaining that her father slept, she turned to the other occupant of the room, and said, more in the tone of one pondering over and repeating something previously heard than of a direct question:

"A hundred and thirty guineas, mother!"

For a minute Mrs. Ashurst made her no reply. Her thoughts were far away. She could scarcely realise the scene passing round her, though she had pictured it to herself a hundred times, in a hundred different phases. Years ago—how many years ago it seemed!—she was delicate and fragile, and thought she should die before her husband, and she would lie awake for hours in the night, rehearsing her own death-bed, and thinking how she should tell James not to grieve after her, but to marry again, anybody except that Eleanor Shaw, the organist's daughter, and she *should* be sorry to think of that flighty minx going through the linen and china after she was gone. And now the time had really come, and he was going to be taken from her; he, her James, with his big brown eyes and long silky hair, and strong lithe figure, as she first remembered him—going to be taken from her now, and leave her an old woman, poor and lone and forlorn—and Mrs. Ashurst tried to stop the tears which rolled down her face, and to reply to her daughter's strange remark.

"A hundred and thirty guineas! Yes, my dear, you're thinking of Mr.—I forget his name—the surgeon. That was the sum he named."

"You're sure of it, mother?"

"Certain sure, my dear! Mr. Casserly, Dr. Osborne's assistant, a very pleasant-spoken young man, showed me the telegraph message, and I read it for myself. It gave me such a turn that I thought I should have dropped, and Mr. Casserly offered me some sal volatile or peppermint—I mean of his own accord, and never intended to charge for it, I am sure."

"A hundred and thirty guineas! and the one chance of saving his life is to be lost because we cannot command that sum! Good God! to think of our losing him for want of——Is there no one, mother, from whom we could get it? Think, think! It's of no use sitting crying there! Think, is there no one who could help us in this strait?"

The feeling of dignity which Mrs. Ashurst knew she ought to have assumed was scared by her daughter's earnestness, so the old lady merely fell to smoothing her dress, and, after a minute's pause, said in a tremulous voice,

"I fear there is no one, my dear! The rector, I daresay, would do something, but I'm afraid your father has already borrowed money of him, and I know he has of Mr. King, the chairman of the governors of the school. I don't know whether Mr. Casserly——"

"Mr. Casserly, mother, a parish doctor's drudge! Is it likely that he would be able to assist us?"

"Well, I don't know, my dear, about being able, I'm sure he would be willing! He was so kind about that sal volatile that I am sure he would do what——Lord! we never thought of Mr. Creswell!"

Set and hard as Marian's face had been throughout the dialogue, it grew even more rigid as she heard these words. Her lips tightened, and her brow clouded as she said, "Do you think that I should have overlooked that chance, mother? Do you not know that Mr. Creswell is away in France? He is the very first person to whom I should have thought of applying."

Under any other circumstances, Mrs.

Ashurst would have been excessively delighted at this announcement. As it was, she merely said, "The young ladies are at Woolgreaves, I think."

"The young ladies!" repeated Marian, bitterly—"the young ladies! The young dolls—dolts—dummies to try dresses on! What are Maude and Gertrude Creswell to us, mother? What kindness, courtesy even, have they ever shown us? To get their uncle's purse is what we most need——"

"Oh, Marian, Marian!" interrupted Mrs. Ashurst, "what are you saying?"

"Saying?" replied Marian, calmly—"saying? The truth! What should I say, when I know that if we had the command of Mr. Creswell's purse, father's life might—from what I gather from Dr. Osborne most probably would—be saved! Are these circumstances under which one should be meek and mild and thankful for one's lot in life! Is this a time to talk of gratitude and——He's moving! Yes, darling father, Marian is here!"

Two hours afterwards, Marian and Dr. Osborne stood in the porch. There were tears in the eyes of the garrulous but kindly old man; but the girl's eyes were dry, and her face was set harder and more rigid than ever. The doctor was the first to speak.

"Good night, my dear child," said he; "and may God comfort you in your affliction! I have given your poor mother a composing draught, and trust to find her better in the morning. Fortunately, you require nothing of that kind. God bless you, my dear! It will be a consolation to you, as it is to me, to know that your father, my dear old friend, went off perfectly placid and peacefully."

"It is a consolation, doctor—more especially as I believe such an ending is rare with people suffering under his disease."

"His disease, child? Why, what do you think your father died of?"

"Think, doctor? I know! Of the want of a hundred and thirty guineas!"

CHAPTER II. RETROSPECTIVE.

THE Reverend James Ashurst had been head master of the Helmingham Grammar School for nearly a quarter of a century. Many old people in the village had a vivid recollection of him as a young man, with his bright brown hair curling over his coat collar, his frank fearless glances, his rapid jerky walk. They recollected how he was by no means particularly well received by the powers that then were, how he was spoken of as "one of the new school"—a term in itself supposed to convey the highest degree of opprobrium—and how the elders had shaken their heads and prophesied that no good would come of the change, and that it would have been better to have held on to old Dr. Munch, after all. Old Dr. Munch, who had been Mr. Ashurst's immediate predecessor, was as bad a specimen of the old-fashioned, nothing-doing, sinecure-seeking pedagogue as could well be imagined; a rotund, red-faced, gouty-footed divine, with a thick layer of limp white cravat loosely tied round his short neck, and his suit of clerical sables splashed with a culinary spray; a man whose originally small stock of classical learning had gradually faded away, and whose originally large stock of idleness and self-gratification had simultaneously increased. Forty male children, born in lawful wedlock in the parish of Helmingham, and properly presented on the foundation, might have enjoyed the advantages of a free classical and mathematical education at the Grammar School under the will of old Sir Ranulph Clinton, the founder; but, under the lax rule of Dr. Munch, the forty gradually dwindled to twenty, and of these twenty but few attended school in the afternoon, knowing perfectly that for the first few minutes after coming in from dinner the Doctor paid but little attention as to which members of the class might be present, and that in a very few minutes he fell into a state of pleasant and unbroken slumber.

This state of affairs was terrible, and, worst of all, it was getting buzzed abroad. The two or three conscientious boys who really wanted to learn shook their heads in despair, and appealed to their parents to "let them leave;" the score of lads who enjoyed the existing state of affairs were, lad-like, unable to keep it to themselves, and went about calling on their neighbours to rejoice with them; so, speedily, every one knew the state of affairs in Helmingham Grammar School. The trustees of the charity, or "governors," as they were called, had not the least notion how to proceed. They were, for the most part, respectable tradesmen of the place, who had vague ideas about "college" as of a sequestered spot where young men walked about in stuff gowns and trencher caps, and were, by some unexplained circumstance, rendered fit and ready for the bishop to convert into clergymen. There must, they

thought, probably be in this "college" some one fit to take the place of old Dr. Munch, who must be got rid of, come what might. At first, the resident "governors"—the tradesmen of Helmingham—thought it best to write to two of their colleagues, who were non-resident, and not by any manner of means tradesmen, being, in fact, two distinguished peers of the realm, who, holding property in the neighbourhood, had, for political reasons, thought fit to cause themselves to be elected governors of old Sir Ranulph Clinton's foundation. The letters explaining the state of affairs, and asking for advice, were duly written; but matters political were at a standstill just then; there was not the remotest chance of an election for years; and so the two private secretaries of the two noble lords pitched their respective letters into their respective waste-baskets, with mutual grins of pity and contempt for the writers. Thrown back on their own resources, the resident governors determined on applying to the rector; acting under the feeling that he, as a clergyman, must have been to this "college," and would doubtless be able to put them in the way of securing such a man as they required. And they were right. The then rector, though an old man, still kept up occasional epistolary intercourse with such of his coevals as remained at the university in the enjoyment of dignities and fellowships; and, being himself both literate and conscientious, was by no means sorry to lend a hand towards the removal of Dr. Munch, whom he looked upon as a scandal to the cloth. A correspondence entered into between the Rector of Helmingham and the Principal of St. Beowulph's College, Oxford, resulted in the enforced resignation of Dr. Munch as the head master of Helmingham Grammar School, and the appointment of the Reverend James Ashurst as his successor. The old Doctor took his fate very calmly; he knew that for a long time he had been doing nothing, and had been sufficiently well paid for it. He settled down in a pleasant village in Kent, where an old crony of his held the position of warden to a City Company's charity, and this history knows him no more.

When James Ashurst received his appointment he was about eight-and-twenty, had taken a double second class, had been scholar and tutor of his college, and stood well for a fellowship. By nature silent and reserved, and having found it necessary for the achievement of his position to renounce nearly all society—for he was by no means a brilliant man, and his successes had been gained by plodding industry, and constant application rather than by the exercise of any natural talent—James Ashurst had but few acquaintances, and to them he never talked of his private affairs. They wondered when they heard that he had renounced certain prospects, notably those of a fellowship, for so poor a preferment as two hundred pounds a year and a free house: for they did not know that the odd, shy, silent man had found time in the intervals of his reading to win the heart of a pretty, trusting girl, and that the great hope of his life, that of being able to marry her and take her to a decent home of which she would be mistress, was about to be accomplished.

On a dreary, dull day, in the beginning of a bitter January, Mr. Ashurst arrived at Helmingham. He found the schoolhouse dirty, dingy, and uncomfortable, bearing traces everywhere of the negligence and squalor of its previous occupant; but the chairman of the governors, who met him on his arrival, told him that it should be thoroughly cleaned and renovated during the Easter holidays, and the mention of those holidays caused James Ashurst's heart to leap and throb with an intensity with which house-painting could not possibly have anything to do. In the Easter holidays he was to make Mary Bridger his wife, and that thought sustained him splendidly during the three dreary intervening months, and helped him to make head against a sea of troubles raging round him. For the task on which he had entered was no easy one. Such boys as had remained in the school under the easy rule of Dr. Munch were of a class much lower than that for which the benefits of the foundation had been contemplated by the benevolent old knight, and having been unaccustomed to any discipline, had arrived at a pitch of lawlessness which required all the new master's energy to combat. This necessary strictness made him unpopular with the boys, and, at first, with their parents, who made loud complaints of their children being "put upon," and in some cases where bodily punishment had been inflicted retribution had been threatened. Then, the chief tradespeople and the farmers, among whom Dr. Munch had been a daily and nightly guest, drinking his mug of ale or his tumbler of brandy-and-water, smoking his long clay pipe, taking his hand at whist, and listening, if not with pleasure,

at any rate without remonstrance, to language and stories more than sufficiently broad and indecorous, found that Mr. Ashurst civilly, but persistently, refused their proffered hospitality, and in consequence pronounced him "stuck-up." No man was more free from class prejudices, but he had been bred in old Somerset country society, where the squirearchy maintained an almost feudal dignity, and his career in college had not taught him the policy of being on terms of familiarity with those whom Fortune had made his inferiors.

So James Ashurst struggled on during the first three months of his novitiate at Helmingham, earnestly and energetically striving to do his duty, with, it must be confessed, but poor result. The governors of the school had been so impressed by the rector's recommendation, and by the testimonials which the new master had submitted to them, that they expected to find the regeneration of the establishment would commence immediately upon James Ashurst's appearance upon the scene, and were rather disappointed when they found that, while the number of scholars remained much the same as at the time of Dr. Munch's retirement, the general dissatisfaction in the village was much greater than it had ever been during the reign of that summarily-treated pedagogue. The rector, to be sure, remained true to the choice he had recommended, and maintained everywhere that Mr. Ashurst had done very well in the face of the greatest difficulties, and would yet bring Helmingham into notice. Notwithstanding constant ocular proof to the contrary, the farmers held that in the clerical profession, as in freemasonry, there was a certain occult something beyond the ordinary ken, which bound members of "the cloth" together, and induced them to support each other to the utmost stretch of their consciences—a proceeding which, in the opinion of free-thinking Helmingham, allowed of a considerable amount of elasticity.

At length the long looked for Easter tide arrived, and James Ashurst hurried away from the dull grey old midland-country village, to the bright little Thames-bordered town where lived his love. A wedding with the church approach one brilliant pathway of spring flowers, a honeymoon of such happiness as one knows but once in a lifetime, passed in the lovely lake country, and then Helmingham again. But with a different aspect. The old schoolhouse itself, brave in fresh paint and new plaster, its renovated diamond windows, its cleaned slab, so classically eloquent on the merits fundatoris nostri, let in over the porch, its newly stuccoed fives' wall and fresh gravelled playground; all this was strange but intelligible. But James Ashurst could not understand yet the change that had come over his inner life. To return after a hard day's grinding in a mill of boys to his own rooms, was, during the first three months of his career at Helmingham merely to exchange active purpose for passive existence. Now, his life did but begin when the labours of the day were over, and he and his wife passed the evenings together, in planning to combat with the present, in delightful anticipations of the future. Mr. Ashurst unwittingly and without the least intending it, had made a very lucky hit in his selection of a wife, so far as the Helmingham people were concerned. He was "that bumptious" as they expressed it, or as we will more charitably say, he was so independent, as not to care one rap what the Helmingham people thought of anything he did, provided he had, as indeed at that time he always had—for he was conscientious in the highest degree—the knowledge that he was acting rightly according to his light. In a very few weeks the sweetness, the quiet frankness, the prepossessing charm of Mrs. Ashurst's demeanour, had neutralised all the ill-effects of her husband's three months' previous career. She was a small-boned, small-featured, delicate-looking little woman, and, as such, excited a certain amount of compassion and kindness amid the midland-county ladies, who, as their husbands said of them, "ran big." It was a positive relief to one to hear her soft little treble voice after the booming diapason of the Helmingham ladies, or to see her pretty little fat dimpled hands flashing here and there in some coquetry of needle-work, after being accustomed to looking on at the steady play of particularly bony and knuckly members, in the unremitting torture of eminently utilitarian employment. High and low, gentle and simple, rich and poor, felt equally kindly disposed towards Mrs. Ashurst. Mrs. Peacock, wife of Squire Peacock, a tremendous magnate and squire of the neighbouring parish, fell so much in love with her that she made her husband send their only son, a magnificent youth destined eventually for Eton, Oxford, Parliament, and a partnership in a brewery, to be introduced to the Muses as a parlour-

boarder in Mr. Ashurst's house, and Hiram Brooks, the blacksmith and minister of the Independent Chapel, who was at never-ending war with all the members of the Establishment, made a special exception in Mrs. Ashurst's favour, and doffed his greasy leathern cap to her as she passed the forge.

And his pretty little wife brought him good fortune, as well as domestic happiness. James Ashurst delighted to think so. His popularity in the village, and in the surrounding country was on the increase; the number of scholars on the foundership had reached its authorised limit (a source of great gratification, though of no pecuniary profit, to the head master); and Master Peacock had now two or three fellow-boarders, each of whom paid a fine annual sum. The governors thought better of their head master now, and the old rector had lived long enough to see his recommendation thoroughly accepted, and his prophecy, as regarded the improved status of the school, duly fulfilled. Popular, successful in his little way, and happy in his domestic relations, James Ashurst had but one want. His wife was childless, and this was to him a source of discomfort, always felt and occasionally expressed. He was just the man who would have doated on a child, would have suffered himself to have been pleasantly befooled by its gambols, and have worshipped it in every phase of its tyranny. But it was not to be, he supposed; that was to be the one black drop in his draught of happiness: and then, after he had been married for five or six years, Mrs. Ashurst brought him a little daughter. His hopes were accomplished, but he nearly lost his wife in their accomplishment; while he dandled the newly born treasure in his arms, Mrs. Ashurst's life was despaired of, and when the chubby baby had grown up into a strong child, and from that sphere of life had softened down into a peaceful girl, her mother, always slight and delicate, had become a constant invalid, whose ill health caused her husband the greatest anxiety, and almost did away with the delight he had in anticipating every wish of his darling little Marian.

James Ashurst had longed for a child, and he loved his little daughter dearly when she came, but even then his wife held the deepest and most sacred place in his heart, and as he marked her faded cheek and lustreless eye, he felt a pang of remorse, and accused himself of having set himself up against the just judgment of Providence, and of having now received the due reward of his repining. For one who thought his darling must be restored to health, no sacrifice could be too great to accomplish that result; and the Helmingham people, who loved Mrs. Ashurst dearly, but who in their direst straits were never accustomed to look for any other advice than that which could be afforded them by Dr. Osborne, or his village opponent, Mr. Sharood, were struck with admiration when Dr. Langton, the great county physician, the oracle of Brocksopp, was called into consultation. Dr. Langton was a very little man, noted almost as much for his reticence as for his skill. He never wasted a word. After a careful examination of Mrs. Ashurst he pronounced it to be a tiresome case, and prescribed a four months' residence at the baths of Ems, as the likely treatment to effect a mitigation, if not a cure. Dr. Osborne, after the great man's departure, laughed aloud in his bluff way at the idea of a country schoolmaster sending his wife to Ems. "Langton is so much in the habit of going about among the country families, and these novi homines of manufacturers who stink of brass, as they say in these parts, that he forgets there is such a thing as having to look carefully at ways and means, my dear Ashurst, and make both dovetail! Baths of Ems, indeed! I'm afraid you've thrown away your ten guineas, my good friend, if that's all you've got out of Langton!" But Dr. Osborne's smile was suddenly checked when Mr. Ashurst said very quietly that as his wife's health was dearer to him than anything on earth, and that as there was no sacrifice which he would not make to accomplish its restoration, he should find means of sending her to Germany, and of keeping her there until it was seen what effect the change had on her.

And he did it! For two successive summers Mrs. Ashurst went to Ems with the old nurse who had brought her up, and accompanied her from her pretty river-side home to Helmingham; and at the end of the second season she returned comparatively well and strong. But she needed all her strength and health when she looked at her husband when he came to meet her in London, and found him thin, changed, round-shouldered, and hollow-eyed, the very shadow of his former self. James Ashurst had carried through his plans as regarded his wife at enormous sacrifice. He had no ready money to meet the sudden call upon his purse which such an expedi-

tion rendered necessary, and he had recourse to money-lenders to raise the first loans required; then to friends to pay the interest on and to obtain renewals of these loans; then to other money-lenders to replace the original sums; and then to other friends to repay a portion of the first friendly loans, until, by the time his wife returned from the second visit to the Continent, he found himself so inextricably involved that he dared not face his position, dared not think of it himself, much less take her into his confidence, and so he went blindly on, paying interest on interest, and hoping ever, with a vague hope, for some relief from his troubles.

That relief never came to James Ashurst in his lifetime. He struggled on in the same hopeless, helpless, hand-to-mouth fashion for about eight years more, always impecunious in the highest degree, always intending to retrieve his fallen fortune, always slowly, but surely, breaking and becoming less and less of a man under the harass of pecuniary troubles, when the illness which for some time had threatened him set in, and, as we have seen, he died.

DICK STEELE.

THERE are characters to whom History vouchsafes no more than a passing sneer or a disparaging monosyllable. Whether, for instance, she guides the pen of Johnson, of Scott, of Macaulay, or of Thackeray, the most dignified of the Muses misses no opportunity of calling the author of The Christian Hero "Dick." Sir Richard Steele is seldom distinguished in her pages by his proper title without a spirit of merriment, as if royalty had knighted him in jest. Yet the mere mention of his beloved and loving partner in genius and in fame, is always graced with some prefix of respect. Where, in the annals of the Augustan age of English literature, does History condescend to sport with the memory of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, and call him "Joe"?

This difference in distinguishing Steele from his friend is the more painful to those who admire him for the sake of his works, because it is greatly deserved. Contemporary and subsequent opinion has, no doubt, been harsh in selecting "Dick's" sins, as the sponsors who gave him that name; but his many virtues were obscured from all, except from his intimate companions. His own irrepressible candour flourished his worst faults in the faces of Mankind; who must not, therefore, be blamed for forming their judgment of him from the only evidence presented to them on the surface. With Addison the result was precisely opposite. The surface of his character shone with a polish that always commanded respect; and it was natural that his failings, concealed within a grave and stately exterior, should never have linked his name with the lightest touch of familiarity.

But, besides the personal shortcomings which Steele was too open-hearted to conceal, he laboured under a disadvantage from which his foremost associates were free; but which has since been entirely overlooked. During the time of his greatest popularity the doctrine of Caste was paramount. Reaction from the grand democratic convulsion of the previous century, had produced a democracy blind to its own interests. Tory mobs passionately assaulted opponents of passive obedience and the divine right of kings. So fervent was the worship of the Tuft, that the public at large liked their nobility and gentry the better for lording it over them. A fool of quality held his own, as a matter of course, against a Solon of humble birth, even in good company. Whatever the discussion, a well-born disputant in danger of defeat had only to ask the question, "Who are you, sir?" to be certain of victory, if his adversary's answer denoted him to be nothing better than a plebeian. In case of any sort of confusion respecting paternity, defeat would be the more crushing. This kind of humiliation Sir Richard Steele had constantly to endure. When teaching in the Tatler "the minuter decencies and inferior duties of life," Steele excited the ire of all the sharpers, duellists, rakes, mohocks, sots, and swearers extant. The more prominent ruffians of gentle blood retorted upon him the withering non sequitur that nobody could find out who his father was. When he insisted, in his famous Crisis, that Dunkirk should be demolished according to treaty, Dr. Wagstaffe thought he had demolished Steele, by logically declaring that "he was ashamed of his name," and that he owed "his birth and condition to a place more barbarous than Carrickfergus." As a convincing argument against reinstating him in the governorship of Drury Lane Theatre, Dennis taunted him with being "descended from a trooper's horse;" the elegant sentence finishing with such a fling at his colleague, Cibber, as unmistakably directed the venom against Steele's birth, and not against a well-known incident in his youthful career. The authors of the Examiner, of the Female Tatler, and other scandalisers flung—with more dirt—doubts at his origin, and Steele cleared it all off, except that which defiled his name. If he had been once for all explicit on that head, his foes would have ceased to trouble him, and the doubt would have ceased to trouble his friends. It manifestly did trouble them. In the last number of the Englishman, Steele wrote thus: "In compliance to the prepossessions of others, rather than, as I think it a matter of consideration myself, I assert (that no nice man of my acquaintance may think himself polluted by conversing with me) that whoever talks to me is speaking to a gentleman born." No more. Neither in Steele's private correspondence, nor in his public writings is this assertion coupled

with any more specific statement; and, although no gentleman is called upon to plead pedigree in abatement of abuse levelled at his early history, yet his friends can always put in that plea for him when proper data are to be obtained. Delicacy in the days of Dennis, Curl, Tutchin, Ridpath, Roper, Wagstaffe, Savage, Mrs. Manley, Pope, and Swift, could not in the least have restrained his friends; for the secrets of private life were marshalled and made public for party purposes, on both sides of every question, with lavish coarseness. Yet the necessary information can nowhere be picked out of the voluminous legacies left by Steele's contemporaries. Even Death, which breaks the seals of many mysteries, revealed nothing but perplexity. In no immediate notice of Steele's demise are his birth and parentage distinctly set forth. Curl, in a memoir published a year after that event, hits the mark no nearer than this: "Being descended from English parents, he used to call himself an Englishman born in Dublin."

The further Time floats us away from the sources of evidence, the fewer doubts remain. Open any biographical essay, dictionary, or any cyclopædia, and you will find it stated, without qualification, that Richard Steele's father was an Irish councillor-at-law and private secretary to James, first Duke of Ormond, and that his mother's name was Gascoigne. The date of his birth has never been so confidently stated. Every year has received that honour from 1671 to 1676. The General Dictionary of Birch and Lockman gives no date; the Biographia Britannica mentions 1676; Nathan Drake, 1675; and 1672 has been noted down more than once: 1671 has remained the fashion since the publication, by Nichols, of Steele's Epistolary Correspondence, for a reason which will be set forth presently.

Thanks to Sir Bernard Burke—the present successor both of Steele's uncle, Gascoigne, and of his friend Addison, as keeper of the Birmingham Record Tower in Dublin Castle—the lists of counsel in the Four Courts have been searched. No one named Steele appears in them within the required period; but a Richard Steele was admitted a member of the King's Inns as an attorney, in 1667. Again, no gentleman named Steele served James, first Duke of Ormond, as private secretary. Neither in the records of Kilkenny Castle, nor in the papers abstracted thence by Carte (when he wrote the life of Marlborough's rival) and deposited them in the Bodleian Library, does the name of Steele occur in any official matter but once, and then it belonged to a lawyer's clerk, who was paid a small sum of money on account of his master. Henry Gascoigne, Dick Steele's uncle, succeeded Sir George Lane as the duke's secretary in 1674.

The earliest authentic notice of the date of Steele's birth is thus recorded in the registers of the London Charter House, for November 17th, 1684:

"Richard Steel admitted for the Duke of Ormond, in the room of Phillip Burrell—aged 13 years 12th March next."

Reckoning that 12th day of March, according to the old style, to be still in the year 1684, the date of Steele's birth would thus be fixed in 1671. It happens that an entry exists in the registers of St. Bride's Church, Dublin, which coincides exactly—too exactly, perhaps—with this register:

"Chrissenings commencing from the 25th of March, 1671.* March ye 12th, Richard, sonn of Richard Steele, baptised."

This date, therefore, has been generally adopted as Steele's birthday, ever since the above document was made known by Nichols, in his preface to Steele's Epistolary Correspondence. A copy of it, certified by a clergyman and two churchwardens, appears amongst Steele's loose papers in the British Museum, at the back of a calculation of the profits of Drury Lane Theatre in 1721, something in cypher about The Fishpool, and the address of a chemist in Westminster. Why it was obtained, or whether acknowledged by Steele as certifying his own date of birth, can never be ascertained. It sets forth, in fact, no more than the date of a baptism performed—if it record the baptism of Sir Richard—before the baby was a day old. This slender improbability got over, the two documents harmonise sufficiently to set doubt at rest. But a third memorandum, in the register of matriculations of the University of Oxford, revives it:

"Ædes Christi.

"Ter ♀ Hilarii 1689. Mar. 13. Ric. Steele 16. R. S. Dublin Gen."

Expanded and translated reading thus: "On the 13th of March, in Hiliary Term, $16\frac{8\,9}{9\,0}$ Richard Steele, of Christ Church, sixteen years of age, son of Richard Steele of Dublin, gentleman." Had the father been a barrister, he would have been designated "esquire."

If Steele completed his sixteenth year only at the above date, he must have been born in the year 1673. This entry, and that at the Charter House, are equally authentic, and equally contradictory of each other; but does it matter to the world at large whether Steele's father was English or Irish, a councillor, the private secretary to a duke, or not; or in what year Steele himself was born? These doubts will not lessen Sir Richard's value to posterity as a genial humourist, a kind sympathetic censor, and a sound politician. They can neither dim nor brighten the lustre of his fame—and they are only put forward here to illustrate some of Steele's early letters, which now see the light in print for the first time.

By the courtesy of the Marquis of Ormonde, the present writer has been granted access to the archives of Kilkenny Castle, where the following characteristic letters were discovered amidst a dazzling treasury of historical documents dating from Brian Boroihm downwards. They are addressed to Dick's "uncle," Henry Gascoigne, the then Duke of Ormond's private secretary. They are printed exactly as written.

Jan. 5 [1690]

Sir,—My Tutour has received ye Certificate for seven pound, for which I most humbly

* New Year's-day, old style.

thank you. I have been w^th^ Dr Hough who received y^r^ letter and Enquired very Civilly after You and my Ladye's health. When I took my leave of him he desired me to inform him, if at any time he could be servicable or assistant to me for he would very readily do it. Dr Aldridge Gives he's Service to y^u^, and told me he should write to you himself by this post. This is all at present from y^r^ most humble Servt and ever-obedient nephew R. STEELE.

Pray S^r^ direct letters to me myself for 'tis something troublesome to my Tutour y^s^ I am and have been very much indisposed by a bile just over my left eye; but I think it mends now.

Postmark March 31 [1690].

S^r^,—I received your letter, and gave Mr. Sherwin his paper from you. Most of the money he had in his hands was before disposed of, therefore he gave me but five pounds, but he will give the rest next Wednesday, till which time I defer my giving y^m^ A true and particular account how my Tutour and I design to dispose of the whole; the night after I writ my last Mr. Horne sent for me to the tavern, where he and Mr. Wood a fellow of that Coll., treated me with Claret and Oysters. I went to give him an account of what you commanded me, but I shall Do at the first Oportunity. Our Dean whome you expected Is, I suppose now at London, the election for students is not very far of now; if y^u^ would be pleased to speak to him or purchace from my Lord a word or two; it would perhaps get me the most Creditable preferment for young men in the whole university there are many here that think of it, but none speak their mind; the places are wholly in the Dean and Cannon's dispose without respect to Schollarship; but if you will vouchsafe to use your interest in my behalf there shall be nothing wanting in the endeavours of Your most obedient nephew

and most humble servant
R. STEELE.

The Dean has two in his gift. My most humble duty to my lady.

May 14.

S^r^,—I have received the Bundle My Lady sent to me And do most humbly thank ye for that and all the rest of y^r^ favours, but my request to you now is that you would compleat all the rest by solliciting the Dean who is now in London in my behalfe for a student's place here; I am satisfied that I stand very fair in his favour. He saw one of my Exercises in the House and commended it very much and said y^t^ if I went on in me Study he did not question but I should make something more than ordinary. I had this from my Tutour. I have I think a good character throughout the whole Coll; I speake not this f^r^ out of any vanity or affectation but to let you know that I have not been altogether negligent on my part: these places are not given by merit but acquired by friends, though I question not but so generous a man as our Dean would rather prefer one that was a Scholar before another. I have had so great advantage in being* *** my own abilities are so very mean I believe there are very few of the Gown in the Coll. so good scholars as I am. My Tutour before told me that if you should be pleased to use your interest for me, or p^t^ my lord's letter or word in my behalfe; it would certainly do my businesse. And y^r^ Friend Dr. Hough the new Bishop of Oxon, I believe may doe much now, for Dr. Aldrich is, as it were, his Dean. Perhaps, Sir, you may be modest in solliciting him, because you may think others trouble him for the same thing; But pray, S^r^, don't let that hinder you for it will be the same case next Election, and if we misse this opportunity 'tis ten to one whether we ever have such another; besides the Dean won't have a place again this three year; therefore I beseech you S^r^ as you have been always heretofore very good to me to use your utmost Endeavour now in my behalfe And assure y^r^self that whatever preferment I ever attain to shall never make me ingratefully forget, and not acknowledge the authour of all my advancement but I shall ever be proud of writing myself Your most obliged and

Hum: Ser^t^
RICH: STEELE.

On a sheet of drafted letters on various matters in Henry Gascoigne's writing, one of which bears date May 27, 1690 (commencing, "I was on ship-board about 3 weeks ago, when I sprained my right arm," which may account for the delay), is the following memorandum: "That your ldship will be pleased to befriend Dick Steele, who is now entered in Ch. Ch., by getting him a student's place there, or something else, to Exse: mee of charges beside what is allowed him by the Charter House." The Duke of Ormond was Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

This request was not granted, but an equivalent was obtained. Steele eventually became a postmaster of Merton College. This letter is addressed to Gascoigne's wife.

Honoured Madam,

Out of a deep sense of y^r^ la^ps^ Goodnesse Towards me, I could not forbear accusing myselfe of Ingratitude in omitting my duty, by not acknowledging y^r^ lad^ship's^ favours by frequent letters; but how to excuse myself as to that point I know not, but must humbly hope y^t^ as you have been alwaies soe bountiful to me as to encourage my endeavours, so y^e^ will be soe mercifull to me as to pardon my faults and neglects. but, Madam, should I expresse my gratitude for every benefit y^t^ I receive at y^r^ lad^shp's^ and my good Vnkle, I should never sit down to meat but I must write a letter when I rise from table; for to his goodnesse I humbly acknowledge my being. but, Mada^m^, not to be too tedious, I shall only subscribe myself Mada^m^, y^r^ la^ship's^

Humble servant and obedient though unworthy nephew
R. STEELE.

* End of page torn away, and one line illegible.

Pray mada^m^ give my duty to my unkle and my good Ant, and my love to my Ingenious Cousin and humble service to good Mrs. Dwight.

Some of these letters are indorsed with the dates in Henry Gascoigne's hand "Dick Steele."

Always Dick from the beginning!

PERVIGILIUM VENERIS.

(PARAPHRASED.)

This poem, commonly printed amongst the verses "attributed to Gallus," was asserted by Erasmus to have been written by Catullus, and by Saumasius to be the work of some unknown poet of the middle ages. The supposition, however, which attributes the authorship of the poem to Annæus Florus, has been sanctioned by Wernsdorf: and certainly, whatever be the period which produced the Pervigilium Veneris, it would seem to have been a period of literary *decadence*, such as the age of Hadrian. That which has tempted to a paraphrase of this little poem is the essentially modern character of it. Its defects have the sort of charm which belongs to features the most faulty, if those features strengthen the family likeness in the countenance of a kinsman.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

New is now the song I sing,
As the freshness of the morn
In the sweetness of the Spring,
When the old world is new-born.
In the Spring the loves assemble,
And the birds in budded bowers;
In the Spring the young leaves tremble
To wet kissings of sun showers.
'Tis the Spring time, and to-morrow,
All among the leafy groves,
Shall divine Dione borrow,
To make cradles for her Loves,
Myrtle branches glad and green.
And, to-morrow, lord and king
Love shall be, from morn to e'en,
Of the kingdoms of the Spring,
And Love's Mother, lady and queen,
These shall rule the world, I ween.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

Form'd from out the white sea foam
And pure ichor all divine,
'Mid those azure flocks that roam
Pastured on the breezy brine,
When the Spring was on the earth,
And the Spring's warmth in the water,
Did old Ocean's joy give birth
To his wave-born wanton daughter,
Therefore to Dione dear
Is the birth-time of the year.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more.

She it is, with gemmy blossoms,
That doth paint the purple year.
She, from whose abundant bosoms
(While the amorous atmosphere
Hums for joy) fresh-bubbled showers
Brim the milk-pails warm and white.
She, at morning, decks the flowers
With the lucid tears of night:
Dewy drops, whose downward brightness,
Pausing, trembling, seems to fall,
Yet, sustained by its own lightness,
Cannot leave those petals small!
Silver drops, from stars distill'd
By the balmy night serene:
Silent, sliding touches, skill'd
To unloose that clinging green
Woven the warm buds around
With such quaint concealing care;
Which their sweet breasts, yet unbound,
Do, for virgin vesture, wear;
Till the maiden flowers, at morn,
Blushing meet the enamoured sun
For whose kisses they were born;
Trembling, glowing, one by one
(Timorous and naked brides!)
Each from out her secret bower,
Where no more chill April hides
What to find the wistful shower,
Sighing low, the leaves divide,
Flower peeps forth after flower.
O that blush of maiden woo'd,
When her virgin love is won!
What is like it? Cypris' blood
And the kiss of Cypris' Son,
And the morning's purple wings,
And the ruby's burning heart,
These, and all delicious things,
Of its beauty are but part!
Yesterday, O trembling maid,
Buried those ripe blushes lay
Under virgin snows, afraid
Of the tale they tell to-day:
Yesterday, that little breast,
Happy bride, hid joy, like sorrow,
Fearful, in its flutter'd vest.
Love shall loose the strings to-morrow.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

She, their gentle Deity,
Calls the nymphs in myrtle grove.
But their leader? Who is he,
If he be not armèd Love?
No. To-day is holiday.
Love hath laid his arms aside.
Naked will he sport and play,
All the amorous Spring-tide,
Lest his bow and arrows trim,
Or his torch, should do some ill.
Yet, O nymphs, beware of him!
Naked Love is weapon'd still.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

Maidens, chaste and pure as thou,
Virgin Delia, to thee
Venus sends us. Prithee now
To our revels welcome be.
Leave our pleasant grove unstain'd
By the blood of savage beast,
And, by maiden prayers constrain'd,
Deign to grace our jocund feast.
Nights of azure weather three,
Dancing these dim woods of thine,
Thou our merry troops shalt see
Crown'd with roses and myrtle twine.
Ceres will not be away;
Nor the tippling Bacchus, Lady;
Nor the Lord of lyric lay;
All along the leafage shady
(If thou wilt not say us nay)
Thee to charm, the sweet night long,
We will chaunt our roundelay;
And thyself shalt praise our song.
Prithee, Delia, do not stay
From Dione's court to-day.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

She, amidst Hyblæan flowers,
Bids us build her florid throne;
And in this light court of ours
Lightly is her bidding done.
All the Graces will be there,
Hybla all her flowers will lend:
Treasures which the opulent year
Doth to her, in tribute, send:
Flowers many more than ever
Bloom'd on Enna's meadow banks,
Flowers from every lawn and river
That doth owe Dione thanks!
And the maidens all will come
From the vales and from the mountains;
Leaving, these their woodland home,
Those their haunts in happy fountains,
Here the nymphs are hastening:
Whilst outspeeding one another,
Boys and maidens homage bring
To the Boy-God's wingèd Mother,
But she bids you, while 'tis Spring,
Boys and maidens both beware,
Since she let's young love go bare.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

Beauty's self hath bid us gather
Beauteous buds, and bring them to her.
For the all-paternal Æther,
He, the green world's earliest wooer,
Wills that, to his warm embrace,
Her most bounteous womb shall bear
(Youngest of an ancient race!)
Yet another infant year.
On her balmy bosom fall
In delicious dews and rains
His prolific kisses all;
Whose sweet influence the deep veins
Of the Mighty Mother fill
With such throbbing joys as pant
Into visible forms, and thrill
Every green and grassy haunt,
Lawn, and lake, and dale, and hill,
With love's labour procreant.
Over heaven, and over earth,
On thro' rill, and river, and ocean,
Moves the mystic spirit of birth,
With a soft and secret motion;
And his breath, with raptures rife,
Opes the glowing gates of life.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before,
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

She, the household gods of Troy
Into royal Latium led.
She to her illustrious boy
The Laurentian virgin wed;
Gave to Mars, in snatcht embrace,
Lips too sweet for Vesta's shrine;
And the Romulean race
Married to the Sabine line:
Whence the lordly Roman springs,
Whence the Conscript Fathers were,
Knights, Quirites, king-born kings,
Cæsar's self, and Cæsar's heir!

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

Far i' the fields doth pleasure stray:
Far i' the fields is Venus found:
Love, himself, was born, they say,
Far i' the fields, on flowery ground.
Him the grassy lawns did guard,
From his happy hour of birth;
He was born on thymy sward:
He was nurst by Rural Mirth.

Love, to-morrow! love, to-morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

Now his gentle yoke he throws
Over all things far and wide.
Hark! the lusty bullock lows
After his brown-spotted bride.
The chill ocean's uncouth droves
Couple in their briny bowers:
And the birds pursue their loves,
Singing from their leafy towers.
Even the wild swan's marriage hymn,
Thro' the reedy marish rings:
And in poplar shadows dim
All night Philomela sings.
Who that hears her happy song
Could believe that voice laments
A loved sister's bitter wrong?
No! she sings, and, singing, vents
Pain (if pain at all) made such
By a too great stress of gladness,
Joy, that were not joy so much
If there were no joy in sadness!
She, and all things else, do sing.
I, alone? shall I be dumb
When to me the long-wisht Spring
Of my love's sweet prime is come?
Nay, if I were silent now,
Would not my dishonour'd Muse
Voice, name, fame, and laurel bough,
Evermore to me refuse?
Which were then deservèd most,
Mine, or weak Amyclæ's fate,
Whom her coward silence lost
When the foe was at the gate?

Love, to-morrow! love, to morrow,
Ye that never have loved before!
And to-morrow, again to-morrow,
Ye that *have* loved, love once more!

NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES.

By Charles Dickens.

ABOARD SHIP.

My journeys as Uncommercial Traveller for the firm of Human Interest Brothers, have not slackened since I last reported of them, but have kept me continually on the move. I remain in the same idle employment. I never solicit an order, I never get any commission, I am the rolling stone that gathers no moss—unless any should by chance be found among these Samples.

Some half a year ago, I found myself in my idlest, dreamiest, and least accountable condition altogether, on board-ship, in the harbour of the City of New York, in the United States of America. Of all the good ships afloat, mine was the good steam-ship Russia, Captain Cook, Cunard line, bound for Liverpool. What more could I wish for?

I had nothing to wish for, but a prosperous passage. My salad-days, when I was

green of visage and sea-sick, being gone with better things (and worse), no coming event cast its shadow before. I might, but a few moments previously, have imitated Sterne, and said, "'And yet, methinks, Eugenius'—laying my forefinger wistfully on his coat-sleeve thus—'and yet, methinks, Eugenius, 'tis but sorry work to part with thee, for what fresh fields * * * my dear Eugenius * * * can be fresher than thou art, and in what pastures new shall I find Eliza—or call her, Eugenius, if thou wilt, Annie,' "—I say I might have done this, but Eugenius was gone, and I hadn't done it.

I was resting on a skylight on the hurricane-deck, watching the working of the ship very slowly about, that she might head for England. It was high noon on a most brilliant day in April, and the beautiful bay was glorious and glowing. Full many a time, on shore there, had I seen the snow come down, down, down (itself like down), until it lay deep in all the ways of men, and particularly, as it seemed, in my way, for I had not gone dry-shod many hours for months. Within two or three days last past, had I watched the feathery fall setting in with the ardour of a new idea, instead of dragging at the skirts of a worn out winter, and permitting glimpses of a fresh young spring. But a bright sun and a clear sky had melted the snow in the great crucible of nature, and it had been poured out again that morning over sea and land, transformed into myriads of gold and silver sparkles.

The ship was fragrant with flowers. Something of the old Mexican passion for flowers may have gradually passed into North America, where flowers are luxuriously grown and tastefully combined in the richest profusion; but be that as it may, such gorgeous farewells in flowers had come on board, that the small Officer's Cabin on deck, which I tenanted, bloomed over into the adjacent scuppers, and banks of other flowers that it couldn't hold, made a garden of the unoccupied tables in the passengers' saloon. These delicious scents of the shore, mingling with the fresh airs of the sea, made the atmosphere a dreamy, an enchanting one. And so, with the watch aloft setting all the sails, and with the screw below revolving at a mighty rate, and occasionally giving the ship an angry shake for resisting, I fell into my idlest ways and lost myself.

As, for instance, whether it was I lying there, or some other entity even more mysterious, was a matter I was far too lazy to look into. What did it signify to me if it were I—or to the more mysterious entity—if it were he? Equally as to the remembrances that drowsily floated by me—or by him—why ask when, or where, the things happened? Was it not enough that they befel at some time, somewhere?

There was that assisting at the Church Service on board another steam-ship, one Sunday, in a stiff breeze. Perhaps on the passage out. No matter. Pleasant to hear the ship's bells go, as like church-bells as they could; pleasant to see the watch off duty mustered, and come in; best hats, best Guernseys, washed hands and faces, smoothed heads. But then arose a set of circumstances so rampantly comical, that no check which the gravest intentions could put upon them would hold them in hand. Thus the scene. Some seventy passengers assembled at the saloon tables. Prayer-books on tables. Ship rolling heavily. Pause. No minister. Rumour has related that a modest young clergyman on board has responded to the captain's request that he will officiate. Pause again, and very heavy rolling. Closed double doors suddenly burst open, and two strong stewards skate in, supporting minister between them. General appearance as of somebody picked up, drunk and incapable, and under conveyance to station-house. Stoppage, pause, and particularly heavy rolling. Stewards watch their opportunity, and balance themselves, but cannot balance minister: who, struggling with a drooping head and a backward tendency, seems determined to return below, while they are as determined that he shall be got to the reading-desk in mid-saloon. Desk portable, sliding away down a long table, and aiming itself at the breasts of various members of the congregation. Here the double doors, which have been carefully closed by other stewards, fly open again, and worldly passenger tumbles in, seemingly with Pale Ale designs: who, seeking friend, says "Joe!" Perceiving incongruity, says "Hullo! Beg yer pardon!" and tumbles out again. All this time the congregation have been breaking up into sects—as the manner of congregations often is—each sect sliding away by itself, and all pounding the weakest sect which slid first into the corner. Utmost point of dissent soon attained in every corner, and violent rolling. Stewards at length make a dash; conduct minister to the mast in the centre of the saloon, which he embraces with both arms; skate out; and leave him in that condition to arrange affairs with flock.

There was another Sunday, when an officer of the ship read the Service. It was quiet and impressive, until we fell upon the dangerous and perfectly unnecessary experiment of striking up a hymn. After it was given out, we all rose, but everybody left it to somebody else to begin. Silence resulting, the officer (no singer himself) rather reproachfully gave us the first line again, upon which a rosy pippin of an old gentleman, remarkable throughout the passage for his cheerful politeness, gave a little stamp with his boot (as if he were leading off a country dance), and blithely warbled us into a show of joining. At the end of the first verse we became, through these tactics, so much refreshed and encouraged, that none of us, howsoever unmelodious, would submit to be left out of the second verse; while as to the third we lifted up our voices in a sacred howl that left it doubtful whether we were the more boastful of the sentiments we united in professing, or of professing them with a most discordant defiance of time, and tune.

"Lord bless us," thought I, when the fresh remembrance of these things made me laugh heartily, alone in the dead water-gurgling waste of the night, what time I was wedged into my berth by a wooden bar, or I must have rolled out of it, "what errand was I then upon, and to what Abyssinian point had public events then marched? No matter as to me. And as to them, if the wonderful popular rage for a plaything (utterly confounding in its inscrutable unreason) had not then lighted on a poor young savage boy, and a poor old screw of a horse, and hauled the first off by the hair of his princely head to 'inspect' British volunteers, and hauled the second off by the hair of his equine tail to the Crystal Palace, why so much the better for all of us outside Bedlam!"

So, sticking to the ship, I was at the trouble of asking myself would I like to show the grog distribution in "the fiddle" at noon, to the Grand United Amalgamated Total Abstinence Society. Yes, I think I should. I think it would do them good to smell the rum, under the circumstances. Over the grog, mixed in a bucket, presides the boatswain's mate, small tin can in hand. Enter the crew, the guilty consumers, the grown up Brood of Giant Despair, in contradistinction to the Band of youthful angel Hope. Some in boots, some in leggings, some in tarpaulin overalls, some in frocks, some in pea-coats, a very few in jackets, most with sou' wester hats, all with something rough and rugged round the throat; all, dripping salt water where they stand; all pelted by weather, besmeared with grease, and blackened by the sooty rigging. Each man's knife in its sheath in his girdle, loosened for dinner. As the first man, with a knowingly kindled eye, watches the filling of the poisoned chalice (truly but a very small tin mug, to be prosaic), and tossing back his head, tosses the contents into himself, and passes the empty chalice and passes on, so the second man with an anticipatory wipe of his mouth on sleeve or neck-kerchief, bides his turn, and drinks and hands, and passes on. In whom, and in each as his turn approaches, beams a knowingly-kindled eye, a brighter temper and a suddenly awakened tendency to be jocose with some shipmate. Nor do I even observe that the man in charge of the ship's lamps, who in right of his office has a double allowance of poisoned chalices, seems thereby vastly degraded, even though he empties the chalices into himself, one after the other, much as if he were delivering their contents at some absorbent establishment in which he had no personal interest. But vastly comforted I note them all to be, on deck presently, even to the circulation of a redder blood in their cold blue knuckles; and when I look up at them lying out on the yards and holding on for life among the beating sails, I cannot for *my* life see the justice of visiting on them—or on me—the drunken crimes of any number of criminals arraigned at the heaviest of Assizes.

Abetting myself in my idle humour, I closed my eyes and recalled life on board of one of those mail packets, as I lay, part of that day, in the bay, of New York O! The regular life began—mine always did, for I never got to sleep afterwards—with the rigging of the pump while it was yet dark, and washing down of the decks. Any enormous giant at a prodigious hydropathic establishment, conscientiously undergoing the Water Cure in all its departments, and extremely particular about cleaning his teeth, would make those noises. Swash, splash, scrub, rub, toothbrush, bubble, swash, splash, bubble, toothbrush, splash, splash, bubble, rub. Then the day would break, and descending from my berth by a graceful ladder composed of half-opened drawers beneath it, I would reopen my outer deadlight and my inner sliding window (closed by a watchman during the Water Cure), and would look out at the long-rolling lead-coloured white-topped

waves, over which the dawn, on a cold winter morning, cast a level lonely glance, and through which the ship fought her melancholy way at a terrific rate. And now, lying down again, awaiting the season for broiled ham and tea, I would be compelled to listen to the voice of conscience—the Screw.

It might be, in some cases, no more than the voice of Stomach, but I called it in my fancy by the higher name. Because, it seemed to me that we were all of us, all day long, endeavouring to stifle the Voice. Because, it was under everybody's pillow, everybody's plate, everybody's camp-stool, everybody's book, everybody's occupation. Because, we pretended not to hear it, especially at meal times, evening whist, and morning conversation on deck; but it was always among us in an under monotone, not to be drowned in pea soup, not to be shuffled with cards, not to be diverted by books, not to be knitted into any pattern, not to be walked away from. It was smoked in the weediest cigar, and drunk in the strongest cocktail; it was conveyed on deck at noon with limp ladies, who lay there in their wrappers until the stars shone; it waited at table with the stewards; nobody could put it out with the lights. It was considered (as on shore) ill bred to acknowledge the Voice of Conscience. It was not polite to mention it. One squally day an amiable gentleman in love, gave much offence to a surrounding circle, including the object of his attachment, by saying of it, after it had goaded him over two easy chairs and a skylight:—"Screw!"

Sometimes it would appear subdued. In fleeting moments when bubbles of champagne pervaded the nose, or when there was "hot pot" in the bill of fare, or when an old dish we had had regularly every day, was described in that official document by a new name. Under such excitements, one would almost believe it hushed. The ceremony of washing plates on deck, performed after every meal by a circle as of ringers of crockery triple-bob majors for a prize, would keep it down. Hauling the reel, taking the sun at noon, posting the twenty-four hours' run, altering the ship's time by the meridian, casting the waste food overboard, and attracting the eager gulls that followed in our wake; these events would suppress it for a while. But the instant any break or pause took place in any such diversion, the Voice would be at it again, importuning us to the last extent. A newly married young pair, who walked the deck affectionately some twenty miles per day, would, in the full flush of their exercise, suddenly become stricken by it, and stand trembling, but otherwise immovable, under its reproaches.

When this terrible monitor was most severe with us, was when the time approached for our retiring to our dens for the night. When the lighted candles in the saloon grew fewer and fewer. When the deserted glasses with spoons in them, grew more and more numerous. When waifs of toasted cheese, and strays of sardines fried in batter, slid languidly to and fro in the table-racks. When the man who always read, had shut up his book and blown out his candle. When the man who always talked, had ceased from troubling. When the man who was always medically reported as going to have delirium tremens, had put it off till to-morrow. When the man who every night devoted himself to a midnight smoke on deck, two hours in length, and who every night was in bed within ten minutes afterwards, was buttoning himself up in his third coat for his hardy vigil. For then, as we fell off one by one, and, entering our several hutches, came into a peculiar atmosphere of bilge water and Windsor soap, the Voice would shake us to the centre. Woe to us when we sat down on our sofa, watching the swinging candle for ever trying and retrying to stand upon his head, or our coat upon its peg imitating us as we appeared in our gymnastic days, by sustaining itself horizontally from the wall, in emulation of the lighter and more facile towels. Then would the Voice especially claim us for its prey and rend us all to pieces.

Lights out, we in our berths, and the wind rising, the Voice grows angrier and deeper. Under the mattress and under the pillow, under the sofa and under the washing stand, under the ship and under the sea, seeming to arise from the foundations under the earth with every scoop of the great Atlantic (and O why scoop so!), always the Voice. Vain to deny its existence, in the night season; impossible to be hard of hearing; Screw, Screw, Screw. Sometimes it lifts out of the water, and revolves with a whirr, like a ferocious firework—except that it never expends itself, but is always ready to go off again; sometimes it seems to be aguish and shivers; sometimes it seems to be terrified by its last plunge, and has a fit which causes it to struggle, quiver, and for an instant stop. And now the ship sets in rolling, as only ships so

fiercely screwed through time and space, day and night, fair weather and foul, *can* roll. Did she ever take a roll before, like that last? Did she ever take a roll before, like this worse one that is coming now? Here is the partition at my ear, down in the deep on the lee side. Are we ever coming up again together? I think not; the partition and I are so long about it that I really do believe we have overdone it this time. Heavens, what a scoop! What a deep scoop, what a hollow scoop, what a long scoop! Will it ever end, and can we bear the heavy mass of water we have taken on board, and which has let loose all the table furniture in the officers' mess, and has beaten open the door of the little passage between the purser and me, and is swashing about, even there, and even here? The purser snores reassuringly, and the ship's bells striking, I hear the cheerful "All's well!" of the watch musically given back the length of the deck as the lately diving partition, now high in air, tries (unsoftened by what we have gone through together) to force me out of bed and berth.

"All's well!" Comforting to know, though surely all might be better. Put aside the rolling, and the rush of water, and think of darting through such darkness with such velocity. Think of any other similar object coming in the opposite direction! Whether there may be an attraction in two such moving bodies out at sea, which may help accident to bring them into collision? Thoughts too arise (the Voice never silent all the while, but marvellously suggestive) of the gulf below; of the strange unfruitful mountain ranges and deep valleys over which we are passing; of monstrous fish, midway; of the ship's suddenly altering her course on her own account, and with a wild plunge settling down, and making *that* voyage, with a crew of dead discoverers. Now, too, one recalls an almost universal tendency on the part of passengers to stumble, at some time or other in the day, on the topic of a certain large steamer making this same run, which was lost at sea and never heard of more. Everybody has seemed under a spell, compelling approach to the threshold of the grim subject, stoppage, discomfiture, and pretence of never having been near it. The boatswain's whistle sounds! A change in the wind, hoarse orders issuing, and the watch very busy. Sails come crashing home overhead, ropes (that seem all knot) ditto; every man engaged appears to have twenty feet, with twenty times the average amount of stamping power in each. Gradually the noise slackens, the hoarse cries die away, the boatswain's whistle softens into the soothing and contented notes, which rather reluctantly admit that the job is done for the time, and the Voice sets in again. Thus come unintelligible dreams of up hill and down hill, and swinging and swaying, until consciousness revives of atmospherical Windsor soap and bilge water, and the Voice announces that the giant has come for the Water Cure again.

Such were my fanciful reminiscences as I lay, part of that day, in the Bay, of New York O! Also, as we passed clear of the Narrows and got out to sea; also, in many an idle hour at sea in sunny weather. At length the observations and computations showed that we should make the coast of Ireland to-night. So I stood watch on deck all night to-night, to see how we made the coast of Ireland.

Very dark, and the sea most brilliantly phosphorescent. Great way on the ship, and double look-out kept. Vigilant captain on the bridge, vigilant first officer looking over the port side, vigilant second officer standing by the quarter-master at the compass, vigilant third officer posted at the stern-rail with a lantern. No passengers on the quiet decks, but expectation everywhere nevertheless. The two men at the wheel, very steady, very serious, and very prompt to answer orders. An order issued sharply now and then, and echoed back; otherwise the night drags slowly, silently, and with no change. All of a sudden, at the blank hour of two in the morning, a vague movement of relief from a long strain expresses itself in all hands; the third officer's lantern twinkles, and he fires a rocket, and another rocket. A sullen solitary light is pointed out to me in the black sky yonder. A change is expected in the Light, but none takes place. "Give them two more rockets, Mr. Vigilant." Two more, and a blue light burnt. All eyes watch the light again. At last a little toy sky-rocket is flashed up from it, and even as that small streak in the darkness dies away, we are telegraphed to Queenstown, Liverpool, and London, and back again under the Ocean to America.

Then, up come the half-dozen passengers who are going ashore at Queenstown, and up comes the Mail-Agent in charge of the bags, and up come the men who are to carry the bags into the Mail Tender that will come off for them out of the harbour. Lamps and lanterns gleam here and there about the decks, and impeding bulks are knocked away with handspikes, and the

port-side bulwark, barren but a moment ago, bursts into a crop of heads of seamen, stewards, and engineers. The light begins to be gained upon, begins to be alongside, begins to be left astern. More rockets, and, between us and the land, steams beautifully the Inman steam-ship, City of Paris, for New York, outward bound. We observe with complacency that the wind is dead against her (it being *with* us), and that she rolls and pitches. (The sickest passenger on board is the most delighted by this circumstance.) Time rushes by, as we rush on, and now we see the light in Queenstown Harbour, and now the lights of the Mail Tender coming out to us. What vagaries the Mail Tender performs on the way, in every point of the compass, especially in those where she has no business, and why she performs them, Heaven only knows! At length she is seen plunging within a cable's length of our port broadside, and is being roared at through our speaking trumpets to do this thing, and not to do that, and to stand by the other, as if she were a very demented Tender indeed. Then, we slackening amidst a deafening roar of steam, this much-abused Tender is made fast to us by hawsers, and the men in readiness carry the bags aboard, and return for more, bending under their burdens, and looking just like the pasteboard figures of the Miller and his Men in the Theatre of our boyhood, and comporting themselves almost as unsteadily. All the while, the unfortunate Tender plunges high and low, and is roared at. Then the Queenstown passengers are put on board of her, with infinite plunging and roaring, and the Tender gets heaved up on the sea to that surprising extent, that she looks within an ace of washing aboard of us, high and dry. Roared at with contumely to the last, this wretched Tender is at length let go, with a final plunge of great ignominy, and falls spinning into our wake.

The Voice of conscience resumed its dominion, as the day climbed up the sky, and kept by all of us passengers into port. Kept by us as we passed other lighthouses, and dangerous islands off the coast, where some of the officers, with whom I stood my watch, had gone ashore in sailing ships in fogs (and of which by that token they seemed to have quite an affectionate remembrance), and past the Welsh coast, and past the Cheshire coast, and past everything and everywhere lying between our ship and her own special dock in the Mersey. Off which, at last, at nine of the clock, on a fair evening early in May, we stopped, and the Voice ceased. A very curious sensation, not unlike having my own ears stopped, ensued upon that silence, and it was with a no less curious sensation that I went over the side of the good Cunard ship Russia (whom Prosperity attend through all her voyages!), and surveyed the outer hull of the gracious monster that the Voice had inhabited. So, perhaps, shall we all, in the spirit, one day survey the frame that held the busier Voice, from which my vagrant fancy derived this similitude.

THE PIGEONS OF VENICE.

Of all the sights of Venice none are more remarkable in their way than the sunsets and the pigeons. Stand on the Molo of a winter's afternoon, with the Doge's Palace on your left hand, and the church of the Salute (Our Lady of Health) on your right, and you will see the Windows of the West thrown open; you will see sunsets that suggest the Judgment Day and the destruction of the world by fire. Wait until the bells ring and the watcher on the tower has mumbled his Ave Maria, and you will see a cloud of pigeons flying from all parts of the city towards the setting sun. It is the tocsin of the Virgin Mary; "twenty-four o'clock," as the Romans say. In a little while, it will be dark, and these pigeons (sacred birds of Venice) will have sought their nests among the domes and spires of the cathedral.

How it came to be a point of pride with the Venetians to defend these birds and to leave legacies to them, and afterwards, in a bewildered sort of way, to seek saintships for them in the local calendar, are matters involved in mystery. But thus much is known respecting them.

The pigeons of Venice are the protégés of the city, as the Lions of St. Mark are its protectors. They are fed every day at two o'clock. A dinner bell is rung for them; and they are not allowed to be interfered with. Any person found ill-treating a pigeon is arrested. If it be his first offence, he is fined; if he be an old offender, he is sent to prison. In the good old days of the Republic, the guilt of shedding a pigeon's blood could only be expiated by the law of Moses taking full effect upon the culprit in the spirit of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," much as the same law was brought to bear on poachers, sheepstealers, and others in our own country, eighty years ago.

It is believed by the credulous that the pigeons of Venice are in some way connected with the prosperity of the city; that they fly round it three times every day in honour of the Trinity; and that their being domiciled in the town is a sign that it will not be swallowed up by the waves. When it is high water, they perch on the top of the tower. When the

Venetians are at war, or when there is any prospect of a change of dynasty, they gather round the Lion of St. Mark, over the entrance to the cathedral, and consult in a low voice about the destinies of the city. Doubt these facts if you like, but not in Venice. What spiders were to Robert Bruce, what crocodiles are to certain wild tribes in Africa, the columbines or little pigeons are to the Venetians.

Some writers assert that the birds came to Venice at the time of the crusades, one of their number having settled on the helmet of a troubadour or "fighting bard," whose songs had lured it out of Palestine. Other accounts say that they were originally heard of, in connexion with a festival or religious procession which took place soon after the foundation of the cathedral in 1071. But the real story is this.

On a certain Palm Sunday, in the Middle Ages, the priests of St. Mark determined to give the people a treat. They collected a number of pigeons, tied small weights to their wings, and set them flying over the Piazza, with a view to their falling into the hands of "needy and deserving persons." Stones, sticks, and knives, were thrown at the birds, and many birds were killed; but some escaped and concealed themselves in the crevices of the cathedral. One took refuge under the gown of the Virgin Mary (a statue so called), and another got entangled in the hands of a clock and bled to death. The sacredness of the place screened the survivors from further harm, and all thoughts of pursuing them were abandoned. They became the pets of the city, and after a few years were taken under the protection of the Doge. By that time they had multiplied to such an extent as to have become almost as numerous as the sparrows are in London; and so great were the love and veneration which they excited in the breasts of the populace, that no man's life was considered safe who insulted a pigeon. Special laws were made for them, called Pigeon Laws, and Venice ran the risk at one time of being permanently called Columbia, or the City of Doves. Finally, a pension was settled upon them, and a daily dinner-bell was rung for their accommodation.

A curious part of this affair is, that the birds never forget their dinner hour—never allow their excursions on the Lagunes to interfere with it. Sometimes the bell rings too soon, sometimes too late; but the birds are always there at the right time; and if the bell-ringing be omitted—as it sometimes has been by way of experiment—they scream and flap their wings in a peculiar manner. This may seem incredible, but the story has been verified over and over again, both for the amusement of visitors and the satisfaction of the authorities.

It is a pretty sight of a summer's day to watch these birds flying about the Piazza to the sound of the bells, and finally alighting under the window of the terrace where their dinner is thrown out to them in a golden shower of grain. Once upon a time it was a young lady who performed this office; now it is a young man. The change is for the worse.

The pigeons of Venice are black and white (or grey) with pink eyes and red feet. A beautiful green collaret surrounds the throat; the body is quite white under the wings. Some of them have white tails, whiter than the snow which falls on the summit of the Appenines; and opal or topaz eyes, which change their tints a thousand times a day. It is of birds like these that mention is made in Eastern stories, birds that did duty as postmen, and carried letters to and fro between ladies and gentlemen. Some say the pigeons of St. Mark are of so rare a breed that none like them are to be obtained for love or money out of the sea-city; but the vouchers are Venetians.

Their principal foes are the cats, the enemies of the feathered race in all parts of the world. Various depredations have been made on the cathedral by these amateurs of game, causing it to be feared, at one time, that a one-sided war of extermination would take place. But these fears have not been realised. The birds are on their guard against their enemies, and housewives who are troubled with mice use traps for their destruction in lieu of cats. Thus, the cats are often reduced to the last stage of misery and degradation. More like tigers than domestic animals, they will fly at their foes on the slightest provocation. But cats are so shamefully treated all over Italy, that there is some excuse for their ferocity. In obscure places they are looked upon as emissaries of the Devil, and are burnt for witches.

Pigeon pie is not a favourite dish with the Venetians. It is considered "shabby genteel" food. Children accustomed to play with the birds in the Piazza will not touch it, and beggars have been known to prefer a crust of dry bread to pigeon's flesh. It may naturally be asked how pigeons come to be eaten at all in a place where they are the object of so much romantic attachment, and why poulterers expose them in their shop windows. Ask this question of an hotel-keeper, and he will tell you that the pigeons sold for food are not the pigeons of St. Mark, but have been imported into Venice from the mainland at great trouble and expense. He will tell you, if he be a Venetian, that he would rather die than cook a city pigeon.

The long and the short of the matter is, that the pigeons of St. Mark are a remnant of the ancient glories of the city: a living record of the days when Venice was the mistress of the seas, the centre of civilisation, the market-place and tribune of one-half of the civilised world. To a Venetian these birds are messengers of peace—tokens of pride and power which will one day reassert themselves.

Some of the pigeons took part in the revolution of 1849 (flying between the Austrians and the Italians) and were shot by mistake; others were cooked for food, or eaten raw. But it is the boast of the Venetians that Venice was true to the pigeons even in her hour of famine; that their dinner-bell was rung regularly; and that their dinner was supplied to them without stint, when hundreds of families were in want

of the commonest necessaries of life, and were visited at the same time by fire, famine, and pestilence. Daniel Manin did his work well. He defended the city against the Austrians, but he did not forget the city birds. They were in a measure bequeathed to him by the Doges, his predecessors, and the people ate porridge while the pigeons (in prime condition to be killed) were flying about the streets. Honour to Daniel Manin! His body lies in the cathedral, but the pigeons of St. Mark have made a dove-cot of his prison bars, and prefer it (or seem to prefer it) to the Bridge of Sighs. So say the people of Venice. And a wild song, sung by the boatmen of the Molo, declares that the spirit of Daniel Manin is flying about the Lagunes to this day, in the shape of a beautiful white dove.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG.

CHAPTER I.

DATCHLEY, Monday, August the First.—Another day of agony and of acting. Soon all must be stopped. It cannot go on. Here is my last day of absence from the bank, and I am not one bit better. They have been only too indulgent. But what can they do? They must have their work done, and already they are complaining up in the London office. A hundred and fifty pounds a year, and that darling of mine, Dora—the children—all depending on me. If I lost this situation, what would become of us? And yet I must. My fingers can scarcely feel the pen, and the trembling characters swim before my eyes as I write on; the paper seems to rise up like waves of a huge white sea and suffuse my pupils. What am I to do? There, my darling has just gone out with the usual question, "How do you feel now, dear? You are stronger after this rest, are you not?" And I falsely say "Yes!" How can I pain her, she suffers more than I do. O, what folly and infatuation to have brought her into this state of life! I should have stood by and let her marry that man, who would have, at least, maintained her in comfort; but my own selfishness would not let me. He might have turned out a good husband. Though he was not a good man, she must have made him one. But my selfishness must sacrifice her to myself. Like us all! There! I open a book—a favourite one of mine—Holy Living and Dying, and read a sentence; up rises the page to my eyes like a great wave of foam; a faint buzzing begins in my ears and swells into the roar of a great sea. What does all this mean? What can be coming? God preserve my senses! or can this be a punishment that I have deserved? Yet the doctor proceeds with his cant, "A little rest is all that is wanted—you must give up work." How smoothly they say these things—so complacently. And pray will you, sir, feed her, feed them, pay the rent? No! so far from that, his eye is wandering to her gentle delicate little fingers, which, by that divine Aladdin's Lamp a dear devoted girl contrives to find, have got hold of what will satisfy him. We men can find for ourselves readily enough, but they find for others. There—there I must stop.

That cruel fellow, Maxwell, the manager, has been twice here in these three days. A cold, hard, cruel man. He said, he supposes I am suffering, as I say so, but really he cannot see what is wrong with me. With difficulty restraining myself, I ask him, Did he suppose I was counterfeiting, or that the doctor was counterfeiting? He answers in his insolent way, that what he supposed privately did not bear on the matter; the question was how the bank was to get its work done. I must see that they could not go on paying high salaries to invalids. He had his duty to the board and shareholders. I was either very sick, or only a little sick. If the former I had better resign, if the latter I had better return to my work. He really could give me no longer than to-morrow at furthest.

Poor Dora shrinks from this cruel sentence as if she were standing in the dock with a child in her arms.

"Oh, Mr. Maxwell," she cries, "you will not be so cruel!" He gave her a savage look.

"That is the word they have for me through the town. Mr. Maxwell, the hard man—a griping, cruel man. I do my duty, my good Mrs. Austen, and let every one else whether they are ladies and gentlemen or no, do theirs."

That was our crime. He never forgave that. He had once swept the bank offices, so the story went. He had no religion but money and figures. He had never been seen once in a place of worship, and one of the clerks saw a cheap translation of the infidel Renan on his table. Yet whatever he does to us I can pray for him to an indulgent Lord, and I shall get Dora to do the same. There again, I must stop. This agitation makes me forget for a few seconds that I can't write.

Tuesday, 2nd.—At last it has all broken down. I dare not go to the office. Quite helpless. She sees it, and knows the miserable night I have passed. I have sent to Maxwell, to the bank. He has cruelly warned me that on the day after to-morrow they will call upon me to resign. Then what will be done! only one thing—Heaven's will.

Three o'clock. Mr. Stanhope, the clergyman, just gone. Lord Langton has fallen from his horse, and they have got down Sir Duncan Dennison, the great London doctor—a good man and a charitable man—and Mr. Stanhope has brought him on to me. But his remedy! I could have laughed, but for her sad face. "My good friend, no tricks will do here. You are in a bad way this moment; and I tell you solemnly your only chance is the German waters, and, listen, one special one of those German places—Homburg—is the only thing to save you. I snatched a man from the jaws, from the throat of death, this year, by packing him off. You must go to-morrow morning." A fine remedy, and a precious one truly. Maxwell comes in as the doctor is there, and Dora passionately tells him what has been said. He listens coolly and civilly.

"With that I have nothing to say. We have to begin making out the report to-night, and are not going to take on fresh hands to swell the expenses. The best thing you can do—and I advise you as manager—is to resign at once. I have another man ready for the place, and I dare say it could be arranged that a quarter's salary could be got in some way, as a bonus, with which you could take your expedition."

"And leave them to starve! What do you suppose is to become of us? Are they to be turned out on the road? Has your bank, your board of blood-suckers, no heart, no soul?"

"The Associated Bank!—God bless me, yes!" said Sir Duncan, who had been silent. "I attend at least two of the directors, as honest and soft fellows as ever signed a cheque. They're not the fellows to suck anybody's blood—unless at least, it's in private."

"They are men of business, sir," said Maxwell, "and do their duty to the bank and the shareholders."

Then they all left us, Sir Duncan saying: "My poor fellow, I am sorry for you! Something may turn up."

We, however, were calm. As I said before, I had taught Dora whom to turn to in these straits, and bade her pray for even Maxwell. On myself I find a sort of insensibility coming, I suppose from illness. And yet I have great vitality and life, and if there was a crisis or purpose before me, could shake all off for a time.

Four o'clock!—What ungrateful creatures we are! Oh, to an ever bountiful Providence be all praise! It seems like a miracle; but that confidence, somehow, never failed. A telegram lies before me from the directors in London. A note from Maxwell, at the same time. He would not come himself, though he came so often before, to gloat over our miseries. But I shall find out more of his treachery. Still I am so joyous, so supremely happy, I can be angry with no one. Mr. Barnard, who is a director, but who has been away on the Continent, has come down himself. He has seen and told me the plan—leave of absence, and *I am not to resign!* Oh, happy change! I feel as in a dream!

Five o'clock.—There is more happiness to set down. I can hardly write these words—not from sickness, but from excitement. It is all settled, and I go, not this morning, but to-night—this very night. Heaven is very good—too good! Not an hour ago Mr. Barnard came in here—his knock made me tremble.

"So you are ill?" he said, it seemed with sternness. "Well, this can't go on. You will lose your situation; the bank must have its work done."

"I know it, sir," I said.

"And so this Sir Duncan says nothing short of Homburg will do you. A first-class watering-place, and an expensive journey for a bank clerk! Well, well!"

Dora was in a flood of tears. "Oh, he will die, sir!" she said, passionately.

"No he won't," he said, with a sudden change in manner—"or, at least, if he does, it shall be his own fault. Come, he shall go, and this night too."

My dear gave a scream. I felt the colour in my own face. He sat down and gave us details of this miraculous deliverance.

Here was the plan, and I do recognise in it one more proof of that actual guidance of Providence—that positive interference in our affairs here below. Oh, how unworthy, I say again, am I of such goodness! Our bank, it seems, in London, has a good many Jew directors, and has been trying to get a little foreign business in the way of agency. A rich Frankfurt merchant, whom he knew,

was anxious to buy an estate in England, for which Barnard was trustee. It was a small one, but he fancied the situation and the house. The writings were prepared; and a solicitor was going out to have them executed, and to receive the money and make other arrangements, when Mr. Barnard conceived this idea of substituting me for the solicitor.

"You shall have your expenses there and back, and handsome ones, too, out of which you can squeeze a fortnight's keep. But you must be back within the month; no shirking, mind, for I am your warranty, and get well, too; make use of every hour; for if you lose this chance, we can't promise you another."

He has gone. A case with the papers and a letter of instruction has just come up. A clerk who brought them counted down fifty golden sovereigns. It is a dream. Dora danced round and kissed one of them. If she were only coming, my love and guardian angel; but we cannot compass that! It will be only for one month, and I shall come back to her happy and strong, and able to work for our children. Is it a dream? It is like a wish in a Fairy Tale. The express leaves to-night at eight. I shall sleep in London and go on to-morrow.

Wednesday, London, Charing Cross Hotel.—Bore the journey wonderfully, getting better absolutely. This is all hope dancing before my eyes. No ledger this morning—my heart is bounding within me. So curious this great desolate chamber, where a hundred people are taking breakfast. Could hear the screaming of the engine close by. My train, yes, in ten minutes. Delighful all this excitement. It is new life—a bright sunny day—the bustling crowds going by—the gay look of everything, and the pleasant journey all before me.

CHAPTER II.

Brussels, six P.M.—Such a day. Delicious sea—happy travellers—charming green fields, and that strange look of Ostend, the first foreign place I have ever seen. All red tiles and potsherds, it seemed to me, at a distance. The white quays and yellow houses. Then the trains through the pleasant Belgian country; the odd faces, and that singular custom of the guard coming in so mysteriously at the door, when the train is at full speed. What things I shall have to tell and amuse darling Dora, whose name makes my heart low, only this excitement prevents me thinking of anything dismal. I shall write a book of travels, make a little money, and give it all to her. But this amazing and delicious capital! It is awe-striking—so solid and splendid—and the glorious cathedral! Such wealth, such gorgeousness to be in the world, which we do not dream of even. The trees in the streets, the people sitting out and taking coffee, the splendid carriages, and all with such a grand and noble air of stateliness. I have noted a thousand things to tell Dora when I return. I feel getting stronger every moment, and a quarter of an hour ago read an English paper, without finding the words swimming, and the paper rising up to my eyes. I think I shall go on to-night.

Friday, Cologne.—A long night in the great roomy carriages, and very comfortable. A little curtain to draw over the lamp, and the whole left to myself: so I might have been in my own room, yet did not get to sleep till nearly one o'clock; not so much from noise or novelty, as from my own thoughts, so much was coming back on me. This was the first time I had been away from home, from Dora; and now that I was at a distance, she, and all that she had passed, began to rise before me like pictures. I could see now—like a man walking back to get a good view of a picture—her sweet face in the centre, and what a deal I had gone through to win it for myself! Though she never shall know it, much of what I suffer now is owing to that six years' feverish anxiety. And I saved her from him. For a time I did feel some remorse, yet now I do not. It was all for a good end.

Let me think now, as an entertainment, of the first bright day on which I saw her. Some wealthy people, who lived in tolerable state, had "filled their house," as it is called, and had asked me down. I was reluctant to go. In these days—and not unpleasant days were they—how I lived in the book world, and very pleasant friends I had among them. For as Richard of Bury says, in words that sound like old church bells, "These are the masters that instruct us without rods; if you chide them they do not answer, if you neglect or ill-treat them they bear no malice. They are always cheerful, sweet-tempered, ready to talk and comfort us at any hour of night or day." For them I felt an affection—they seemed to me beautiful, with charming faces, and shall I own it?—some of the prettiest faces of nature when shown to me, appeared to

me, much as these pretty faces would look on mere money treasures. Do I not remember how I used to look out at the world, as from a window, and punctually as the clock struck twelve every night, would put away work, fetch out the best novel of the day, light the soothing cigar, and read for two hours? How enjoyable was this time, almost too exquisite! But the whole was about to collapse like a card house.

How curious this dark country looks "roaring by" the window with the glare and flash from a station. The dull "burr" of the train, and the lights from the windows dappling the ground. As I look out I see the small dark figure of the guard creeping along outside. In this situation, in my lonely blue chamber, there is a sort of vacuity for thought, the world is shut out and the pictures of the past pour in

Was it not a very stately place—a new castle, grand stabling, horses and carriages in profusion, as I was shown into the great drawing-room, and received with welcome by the hostess. The guests were all out, shooting, riding, walking, and—so unfortunate she says—lunch was over. The young ladies were in the garden, where we would go and look for them. Stay; no, here they were coming, and past the mullioned windows, which ran down to the ground, flitted two or three figures, led by a little scarlet cloak. In a second cheerful voices rang out like music; the door opened, and she came tripping in. I did not see the others. I do not know who they were to this moment; but was it not *then*, my dear foolish Austen, that everything fell in like a house of cards—that the glory passed away from the books and never returned?

Her name was Dora—a pretty and melodious one; she was small, elegantly made, and with dancing eyes, bright sloe black hair, and a look of refinement about her small features I have never seen in any one else. She was full of spirits, and laughter, and delight. I recollect to this moment how I was introduced, with what a coquettish solemnity she went through the ceremony, and how, as I bowed, I felt something whisper to me, "This is an important moment for you, sir . . ."

She was daughter to a great House in the neighbourhood. From that hour she unconsciously entered into my life. She little thought how her airy figure was to hover about my study, and of how many day dreams she was to be the centre. So do the years go by; yet that dull blue cloth before me seems to open and draw away, and show me that gay noonday and that "morning room" at —— House as distinctly as if it were yesterday. In my pocket-book I have at this moment a picture of her, done, not by the fanciful touch of memory, but by, perhaps, the less enduring one of the camera. It is hard to see by this light. Yes, there she is, a cloud of white sweeping behind her, flowers in her hand, with a soft inquiring look, half serious, and that seems on the verge of breaking into a smile, and spoiling the operator's whole work. So I saw her then, so I see her now. What if I was never to see her again! But this is too lugubrious! . . .

There, the blast again—a flashing and flaring of lamps, a screaming of the whistles, and we rumble into a blaze of light, with buffets and offices lit up, and sleepy passengers waiting. One fellow in a white hat invades my blue chamber—a gross Belgian, with a theatrical portmanteau pushed in before him, and an air as if he were performing some feat of distinction. Away flutters the little figure, and from that moment the charm is broken, clouds of tobacco-smoke begin, wherein, I suppose—fitting back-ground—he sees pictures of his own gross déjeuner à la fourchette, or dinner, at the Trois Frères. A true beast, that presently grunts and snores, lives but for the present hour, and never lifts up his soul in gratitude or humility. There, he has got out, and we have done with him. I know now the secret of this dislike; he reminded me so of Grainger, the only evil genius I ever encountered in my life, and the evil genius that I vanquished. Rather, grace and strength came to me from above, to aid me to vanquish him.

I see the very street in the little town on that gay morning. How well I remember our all rushing to the window of the bank the day the regiment came in—when we heard their music, and I must have seen him—Grainger—walk by, his sword drawn, at the head of his company, and looked at him, perhaps with admiration. I little dreamed what he was to be towards me, later. I thought of their coming with pleasure; it would vary the monotony. I thought of how they would amuse her, perhaps, for whom a country town must be dull indeed. Later, I see soldiers walking about the place, the officers rather fine and

contemptuous, for which one could bear them no ill-will, as they had fought and bled for us, and might take little airs.

(A cold blast and rush of air, as the conductor has come in like a spirit, with a lantern, and wants to see tickets.)

Let me look back again, setting my head, now aching a good deal, against these comfortable cushions. It is not likely that I shall sleep under these strange conditions. I like dwelling on little pictures of that time, and it is an easy and pleasant amusement constructing them. I next see one of our country-town little parties, and he making his way—no, not making, he disdained that trouble, he took it. His way he chose fitfully; he selected anything at hazard, called it his way, and others cheerfully bowed and adopted it. There are a few such men in the world, and I have often envied them. Such a manner is worth money and place and estate. See how long one of us takes to carry out a little play, to get to know people, even. We hesitate, make timorous advances, lose days and weeks. He does all in a few minutes. Time, in this short life, is money, and more valuable.

I dare say all this time he heartily disliked me—I am sure he did—and had that instinctive dislike which one man often has to another from the very outset. His eyes seemed to challenge me, and he knew me for an adversary. How could I compete with him, with such advantages on his side? And he had a great one, for in those days, my dear Dora, you were a little, ever so little, of a coquette, and liked to have your amusement, which was very natural indeed.

I have had my trials. My father had speculated and lost a fine estate, which he had also encumbered. We had all then to work and do what we could. I was a gentleman, and, though not a rich one, quite as good as they. But they looked down on me, because we had lost our fortune. Dora's father had bitterly resented what she had done, and all her fortune and estate, too, was left away to a cousin—a drinking, hunting fellow—who was amazed at his good fortune. I never regretted it a moment.

Grainger cast his eyes on her just to fill up his idle time. For me he affected contempt, but from me he was to have a lesson. They wished to force her to marry him, and she was helpless in their hands. But when I heard that scandal about the innkeeper's daughter, where, too, he was lodging, was I not right to hunt it up? Could I have stood by and looked on? And though they said, and he protested, it was false, what of that? Did I not know him to be a man of a certain life? There were other cases as bad. He was not fit to be her husband, and if he did "go to the bad," later, it concerned himself, and merely proved my discernment. Thank God I saved her! and I can now lay my hand on my heart and feel no compunction whatever. O that happy first year! She changed the whole colour of my life, made me thoughtful, steady, and taught me even to pray, which I did little of before. Angel! She shall teach me much more yet.

Saturday.—Homburg at last. Delightful and most easy journey. I have written my letter to her from this sweet and pastoral place. I write in the daintiest of little rooms, the yellow jalousies drawn close to keep out the sun. Outside the window is a balcony, Venetian-like in its breadth, filled up with a whole garden of flowers, where there is a table, and where one can walk about. It recals an old and lost place in the country, before we were ruined, as they say. Overhead is an awning, and when the sun is less strong, I can go out, and walk up and down, and look into the street. If only Dora were here! No matter; one of these days she shall be, and better times will come; "one colour cannot always be turning up," as the maid said this morning. And here comes the post—a fellow like a soldier, with a very grim moustache, who hands in a letter. It is from her, I could guess at her writing from the very balcony. I run down to take it from the landlady's hands and tear it open. It seems a whole year since I have seen her. Dear characters! sweet writing! I fasten it in here, at this page of my little diary.

"Dearest,—Oh, how I miss and long for you. How I long to learn that you have borne the journey well; *not that you are better already, for that I am not so unreasonable as to expect.* But soon you will tell me so. Our two little darlings only know that you have gone away. They think it is to the nearest town, and that you will be back to-morrow. Don't fatigue yourself writing, think only of your dear health. Keep out of the dreadful sun, and amuse yourself. I hope this will find you on your arrival.

"Dora."

The underlined words, how delicate, how

like her sweet soul! She has a faint notion, but she dares not let it appear, that I am a little better. I shall write this moment—what joyful news for her! . . . There, I have told her all, everything. Four closely written pages, a *little* swimming of the head, but I could almost work at the ledger this moment. I have told her how I was out betimes this morning, at six o'clock; how I walked up the bright street lined with fairy looking houses, all with their short broad balconies loaded with flowers, past the gay festive pavilions, more than hotels, the Four Seasons, the Victoria, with the cool shady courts and porches, past that turn to the right, down another sweet alley where are more fairy-like houses with balconies, and where the great ones live. The Kisseleff-street they call it, which gives a grand and inspiring Russian association. All this time in front of me, as I ascend, and seemingly far away, yet very close, are the rich, cool, heavily laden Taunus hills, covered with trees and verdure, rising slowly and grandly, and filling up the gap between the houses at the far end of the town. Then I walk on upwards, and see lovers of pleasure in white coats and straw Panama hats, sitting out in front of the hotels and smoking in the shade. Then I pass the great red building, the Kursaal, the Temple of Play, which looks like a king's palace. Then I turn down to the right, past the most inviting villas, all colours and shapes, now a Swiss châlet, now a true Italian house, but overgrown with the most exquisite foliage, the metal of their balconies all embroidered with leaves, behind which you see white dresses, and from behind which comes the clink of breakfast china. Other windows, windows lower down, are thrown wide open, and there the morning meal goes on, even in the gardens; fat men in white coats and no waistcoats, with four double chins at least, are enjoying pipe and coffee. Then the houses stop short, and the dense greenery begins, groves upon groves, forest mounting over forest, walks winding here and winding there. Along the path, honest Homburgers have their little table with an awning, under which is the cool melon, the grape, the delicious honey, and mountain butter, most inviting. If Dora were but on my arm how she would enjoy all this, as, indeed, I must stop in this description to tell her.

Well, I walk on through this greenery, through the most charming alleys, cut in the groves, and, through the trees, see afar the glitter of company, the sheen of curious figures flitting to and fro among the leaves, the glimpse of a Swiss châlet. Such crowds, it seems like a Watteau feast! Down through the avenues float the balmiest breezes, health restoring as I feel when they touch me. Then I emerge on the open space, and see the most animated scene, bright colours, bright dresses, white coats, grey coats, hats white and grey, fluttering veils, pink and cream coloured parasols, flowers, "costumes," of every pattern, actually like the opening scene of the chorus at an opera seen long, long ago. From a pagoda came strains of rich music with the clash of cymbals, and soft stroke of drum. How new, how delicious all this to me! In the centre was the well deep below, with spacious steps leading down, and girls giving out the water, and crowds pressing forward to receive it. The chinking of glass everywhere. Beyond, again, rows of little shops for jewellery and trifles, charming and most exhilarating scene, as I look on. The animation and gaiety drive away all the sinking and weakness, and I seem to grow strong and hopeful every moment. Down the steps do they troop, the loveliest of women, French, English, and American, as I know by the curious chatter of the voices, and with them lords, and friends, and admirers.

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A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER III. MARIAN.

THE little child who was so long prayed for, and who came at last in answer to James Ashurst's fervent prayers, had nothing during her childhood to distinguish her from ordinary children. It is scarcely worthy of record that her mother had a hundred anecdotes illustrative of her precocity, of her difference from other infants, of certain peculiarities never before noticed in a child of tender years. All mothers say these things, whether they believe them or not, and Mrs. Ashurst, stretched on her sick couch, did believe them, and found in watching what she believed to be the abnormal gambols of her child, a certain relief from the constant dreary wearing pain which sapped her strength, and rendered her life void, and colourless, and unsatisfactory. James Ashurst believed them fervently; even if they had required a greater amount of credulity than that which he was blessed with, he, knowing it gave the greatest pleasure to his wife, would have stuck to the text that Marian was a wonderful, "really, he might say, a very wonderful, child." But he had never seen anything of childhood since his own, which he had forgotten, and the awakening of the commonest faculties in his daughter came upon him as extraordinary revelations of subtle character, which, when their possessor had arrived at years of maturity, would astonish the world. The Helmingham people did not subscribe to these opinions. Most of them had children of their own, who, they considered, were quite as eccentric, and odd, and peculiar as Marian Ashurst. "Not that I'm for 'lowin that to be pert and sassy one minute, and sittin' mumchance wi'out sa much as a word to throw at a dog the next, is quite manners," they would say among themselves, "but what's ye to expect? Poor Mrs. Ashurst layin' on the brode of her back, and little enough of that, poor thing, and that poor feckless creature, the schoolmaster, buzzed i' his 'ed wi' book larnin' and that! A pretty pair to bring up such a tyke as Miss Madge!"

That was in the very early days of her life. As the "tyke" grew up she dropped all outward signs of tykeishness, and seemed to be endeavouring to prove that eccentricity was the very last thing to be ascribed to her. The Misses Lewin, whose finishing school was renowned throughout the county, declared they had never had so quick or so hard-working a pupil as Miss Ashurst, or one who had done them so much credit in so short a time. The new rector of Helmingham declared that he should not have known how to get through his class and parish work, had it not been for the assistance which he had received from Miss Ashurst, at times when—when really—well, other young ladies would, without the slightest harm to themselves, be it said, have been enjoying themselves in the croquet-ground. When the wardrobe woman retired from the school to enter into the bonds of wedlock with the drill-sergeant (whose expansive chest and manly figure when going through the "exercise without clubs," might have softened Medusa herself), Marian Ashurst at once took upon herself the vacant situation, and resolutely refused to allow any one else to fill it. These may have been put down as eccentricities; they were evidences of odd character certainly not usually found in girls of Marian's age, but they were proofs of a spirit far above tykeishness. All her best

friends, except of course the members of her family, whose views regarding her were naturally extremely circumscribed, noticed in the girl an exceedingly great desire for the acquisition of knowledge, a power of industry and application quite unusual, an extraordinary devotion to anything she undertook, which suffered itself to be turned away by no temptation, to be wearied by no fatigue. Always eager to help in any scheme, always bright-eyed and clear-headed and keen-witted, never unduly asserting herself, but always having her own way while persuading her interlocutors that she was following their dictates, the odd shy child grew up into a girl less shy indeed, but scarcely less odd. And certainly not loveable; those who fought her battles most strongly—and even in that secluded village there were social and domestic battles, strong internecine warfare, carried on with as much rancour as in the great city itself—were compelled to admit there was "a something" in her which they disliked, and which occasionally was eminently repulsive.

This something had developed itself strongly in the character of the child, before she emerged into girlhood, and though it remained vague as to definition, while distinct as to impression in the minds of others, Marian herself understood it perfectly, and could have told any one, had she chosen, what it was that made her unlike the other children, apart from her being brighter and smarter than they, a difference which she also perfectly understood. She would have said, "I am very fond of money, and the others are not; they are content to have food and clothes, but I like to see the money that is paid for them, and to have some of it, all for myself, and to heap it up and look at it, and I am not satisfied as they are, when they have what they want—I want better things, nicer food, and smarter clothes, and more than them, the money. I don't say so, because I know papa hasn't got it, and so he cannot give it to me, but I wish he could. There is no use talking and grumbling about things we cannot have; people laugh at you, and are glad you are so foolish when you do that, so I say nothing about it, but I wish I was rich."

Marian would have made some such answer to any one who should have endeavoured to get at her mind to find out what that was lurking there, never clearly seen, but always plainly felt, which made her "old fashioned," in other than the pathetic and interesting sense in which that expression has come to be used with reference to children, before she had entered upon her teens.

A clever mother would have found out this grave and ominous component of the child's character—would have interpreted the absence of the thoughtless extravagance, so charming, if sometimes so trying, of childhood—would have been quick to have noticed that Marian asked, "What will it cost?" and gravely entered into mental calculation on occasions when other children would have demanded the purchase of a coveted article clamorously, and shrieked if it were refused. But Mrs. Ashurst was not a clever mother, she was only a loving, indulgent, rather helpless one, and the little Marian's careful ways were such a practical comfort to her, while the child was young, that it never occurred to her to investigate their origin, to ask whether such a very desirable and fortunate effect could by possibility have a reprehensible, dangerous, insidious cause. Marian never wasted her pennies, Marian never spoiled her frocks, Marian never lost or broke anything; all these exceptional virtues Mrs. Ashurst carefully noted and treasured in the storehouse of her memory. What she did not notice was, that Marian never gave anything away, never voluntarily shared any of her little possessions with her playfellows, and, when directed to do so, complied with a reluctance which all her pride, all her brave dread of the appearance of being coerced, hardly enabled her to subdue, and suffered afterwards in an unchildlike way. What she did not observe was, that Marian was not to be taken in by glitter and show; that she preferred, from the early days in which her power of exhibiting her preference was limited by the extent of the choice which the toy-merchant—who combined hardbake and hairdressing with ministering to the pleasures of infancy—afforded within the sum of sixpence. If Marian took any one into her confidence, or asked advice on such solemn occasions—generally ensuing on a protracted hoarding of the coin in question—it would not be by the questions, "Is it the prettiest?" "Is it the nicest?" but, "Do you think it is worth sixpence?" and the child would look from the toy to the money, held closely in the shut palm of her chubby hand, with a perturbed countenance, in which the pleasure of the acquisition was almost neutralised by the pain of the payment—a countenance

in which the spirit of barter was to be discerned by knowing eyes. But none such took note of Marian's childhood. The illumination of love is rather dazzling than searching in the case of mothers of Mrs. Ashurst's class, and she was dazzled. Marian was perfection in her eyes, and at an age at which the inversion of the relations between mother and daughter, common enough in later life, would have appeared to others unreasonable, preposterous, Mrs. Ashurst surrendered herself wholly, happily, to the guidance and the care of her daughter. The inevitable self-assertion of the stronger mind took place, the inevitable submission of the weaker. In this instance, a gentle, persuasive, unconscious self-assertion, a joyful yielding, without one traversing thought of humiliation or deposition.

Her daughter was so clever, so helpful, so grave, so good, her economy and management—surely they were wonderful in so young a girl, and must have come to her by instinct?—rendered life such a different, so much easier a thing, delicate as she was, and requiring so disproportionate a share of their small means to be expended on her, that it was not surprising Mrs. Ashurst should see no possibility of evil in the origin of such qualities.

As for Marian's father, he was about as likely to discover a comet or a continent as to discern a flaw in his daughter's moral nature. The child, so longed for, so fervently implored, remained always, in her father's sight, Heaven's best gift to him; and he rejoiced exceedingly, and wondered not a little, as she developed into the girl whom we have seen beside his death-bed. He rejoiced because she was so clever, so quick, so ready, had such a masterly mind and happy faculty of acquiring knowledge; knowledge of the kind he prized and reverenced; of the kind which he felt would remain to her, an inheritance for her life. He wondered why she was so strong, for he knew she did not take the peculiar kind of strength of character from him or from her mother.

It was not to be wondered at that these peculiarities of Marian Ashurst were noticed by the inhabitants of the village where she was born, and where her childish days had been passed; but it was remarkable that they were regarded with anything but admiration. For a keen appreciation of money, and an unfailing determination to obtain their money's worth, had long been held to be eminently characteristic of the denizens of Helmingham. The cheese-factor used to declare that the hardest bargains throughout his county connexion were those which Mrs. Croke, and Mrs. Whicher, and, worst of all, old Mrs. M'Shaw (who, though Helmingham born and bred, had married Sandy M'Shaw, a Scotch gardener, imported by old Squire Creswell) drove with him. Not the very best ale to be found in the cellars of the Lion at Brocksopp (and they could give you a good glass of ale, bright, beaming, and mellow, at the Lion, when they chose), not the strongest mahogany-coloured brandy-and-water, mixed in the bar by the fair hands of Miss Parkhurst herself, not even the celebrated rum-punch, the recipe of which, like the songs of the Scandinavian scalds, had never been written out, but had descended orally to old Tilley, the short, stout, rubicund landlord—had ever softened the heart of a Helmingham farmer in the matter of business, or induced him to take a shilling less for a quarter of wheat, or a truss of straw, than he had originally made up his mind to sell it at.

"Canny Helmingham," was its name throughout the county, and its people were proud of it. Mr. Frampton, an earnest clergyman who had succeeded the old rector, had been forewarned of the popular prejudice, and on the second Sunday of his ministry addressed his parishioners in a very powerful and eloquent discourse upon the wickedness of avarice and the folly of heaping up worldly riches; after which, seeing that the only effect his sermon had was to lay him open to palpable rudeness, he wisely concentrated his energies on his translation of Horace's Odes (which has since gained him such great renown, and of which at least forty copies have been sold), and left his parishioners' souls to take care of themselves. But however canny and saving they might be, and however sharply they might battle with the cheese-factor, and look after the dairymaid, as behoved farmers' wives in these awful days of free trade (they had a firm belief in Helmingham that "Cobden," under which generic name they understood it, was a kind of pest, as is the smut in wheat, or the tick in sheep), all the principal dames in the village were greatly shocked at the unnatural love of money which it was impossible to help noticing in Marian Ashurst.

"There was time enow to think o' they things, money and such like fash, when pipple was settled down," as Mrs. Croke said, "but to see children hardenin' their

hearts and scroogin' their pocket-money is unnatural, to say the least of it!" It was unnatural and unpopular in Helmingham. Mrs. Croke put such a screw on the cheese-factor, that in the evening after his dealings with her, that worthy filled the commercial room at the Lion with strange oaths and modern instances of sharp dealing in which Mrs. Croke bore away the palm; but she was highly indignant when Lotty Croke's godmother bought her a savings bank, a grey edifice, with what theatrical people call a practicable chimney down which the intended savings should be deposited. Mrs. Whicher's dairymaid, who, being from Ireland, and a Roman Catholic in faith, was looked upon with suspicion, not to say fear, in the village, and who was regarded by the farmers as in constant, though secret, communication with the Pope of Rome and the Jesuit College generally, declared that her mistress "canthered the life out of her" in the matter of small wages and much work; but Mrs. Whicher's daughter, Emily, had more crimson gowns, and more elegant bonnets, with regular fields of poppies, and perfect harvests of ears of corn growing out of them, than any of her compeers, for which choice articles the heavy bill of Madame Morgan—formerly of Paris, now of Brocksopp—was paid without a murmur. "It's unnatral in a gell like Marian Ashurst to think so much o' money and what it brings," would be a frequent remark at one of those private Helmingham institutions known as "Thick teas." And then Mrs. Croke would say, "And what like will a gell o' that sort look to marry? Why a man maun have poun's and poun's before she'd say, 'yea' and buckle to!"

But that was a matter which Marian had already decided upon.

CHAPTER IV. MARIAN'S CHOICE.

At a time when it seemed as though the unchildlike qualities which had distinguished the child from her playmates and coevals were intensifying and maturing in the girl growing up, then, to all appearance, hard, calculating, and mercenary, Marian Ashurst fell in love, and thenceforward the whole current of her being was diverted into healthier and more natural channels. Fell in love is the right and the only description of the process, so far as Marian was concerned. Of course she had frequently discussed the great question which racks the hearts of boarding school misses, and helps to fill up the spare time of middle-aged women, with her young companions; had listened with outward calmness and propriety, but with an enormous amount of unshown cynicism, to their simple gushings; and had said sufficient to lead them to believe that she joined in their fervent admiration of and aspiration for young men with black eyes and white hands, straight noses, and curly hair. But all the time Marian was building for herself a castle in the air, the proprietor of which, whose wife she intended to be, was a very different person from the hairdressers' dummies whose regularity of feature caused the hearts of her companions to palpitate. The personal appearance of her future husband had never given her an instant's care; she had no preference in the colour of his eyes or hair, in his height, style, or even of his age, except she thought she would rather he were old. Being old, he was more likely to be generous, less likely to be selfish, more likely to have amassed riches and to be wealthy. His fortune would be made, not to be made; there would be no struggling, no self-denial, no hope required. Marian's domestic experiences caused her to hate anything in which hope was required; she had been dosed with hope without the smallest improvement, and had lost faith in the treatment. Marriage was the one chance possible for her to carry out the dearest, most deeply implanted, longest cherished aspiration of her heart—the acquisition of money and power. She knew that the possession of the one led to the other, from the time when she had saved her schoolgirl pennies and had noticed the court paid to her by her little friends, to the then moment, when the mere fact of her having a small stock of ready money, even more than her sense and shrewdness, gave her position in that impecunious household, she had recognised the impossibility of achieving even a semblance of happiness in poverty. When she married, it should be for money, and for money alone. In the hard school of life in which she had been trained she had learned that the prize she was aiming at was a great one, and one difficult to be obtained; but that knowledge only made her the more determined in its pursuit. The difficulties around her were immense; in the narrow circle in which she lived she had not any present chances of meeting with any person likely to be able to give her the position which she sought, far less of rendering him subservient to her wishes. But she waited

and hoped; she was waiting and hoping, calmly and quietly fulfilling the ordinary duties of her very ordinary life, but never losing sight of her fixed intent. Then across the path of her life there came a man who seemed to give promise of eventually fulfilling the requirements she had planned out for herself. It was but a promise; there was nothing tangible; but the promise was so good, the girl's heart yearned for an occupant, and, with all its hard teaching and its worldly aspirations, it was but human after all. So her human heart and her worldly wisdom came to a compromise in the matter of her acceptance of a lover, and the result of that compromise was her engagement to Walter Joyce.

When the Helmingham Grammar School was under the misrule of old Dr. Munch, then at its lowest ebb, and nominations to the foundation were to be had for the asking, and, indeed, in many cases were sent a-begging, it occurred to the old head master to offer one of the vacancies to Mr. Joyce, the principal grocer and maltster of the village, whose son was then just of an age to render him accessible to the benefits of the education which Sir Ranulph Clinton had demised to the youth of Helmingham, and which was then being so imperfectly supplied to them under the auspices of Dr. Munch. You must not for an instant imagine that the offer was made by the old Doctor out of pure loving-kindness and magnanimity; he looked at it, as he did at most things, from a purely practical point of view; he owed Joyce, the grocer, so much money, and if Joyce, the grocer, would write him a receipt in full for all his indebtedness in return for a nomination for Joyce junior, at least he, the Doctor, would not have done a bad stroke of business. He would have wiped out an existing score, the value of which proceeding meant, in Dr. Munch's eyes, that he would be enabled at once to commence a fresh one, while the acquisition of young Joyce as a scholar would not cause one atom of difference in the manner in which the school was conducted, or rather left to conduct itself. The offer was worth making, for the debt was heavy, though the Doctor was by no means sure of its being accepted. Andrew Joyce was not Helmingham born; he had come from Spindleton, one of the large inland capitals, and had purchased the business which he owned. He was not popular among the Helmingham folk, who were all strict church people, so far as morning service attending, tithe paying, and parson-respecting were concerned, from the fact that his religious tendencies were suspected to be what the villagers termed "methodee." He had his seat in the village church, it is true, and put in an appearance there on the Sunday morning, but instead of spending the Sabbath evening in the orthodox way—which at Helmingham consisted in sitting in the best parlour, with a very dim light, and enjoying the blessings of sound sleep, while Nelson's Fasts and Festivals, or some equally proper work, rested on the sleeper's knee, until it fell off with a crash, and was only recovered to be held upside down until the grateful announcement of the arrival of supper—Mr. Joyce was in the habit of dropping into Salem Chapel, where Mr. Stoker, a shining light from the pottery district, dealt forth the most uncomfortable doctrine in the most forcible manner. The Helmingham people declared, too, that Andrew Joyce was "uncanny" in other ways; he was close-fisted and niggardly, his name was to be found on no subscription list; he was litigious; he declared that Mr. Prickett, the old-fashioned solicitor of the village, was too slow for him, and he put his law matters into the hands of Messrs. Sheen and Nasmyth, attorneys at Brocksopp, who levied a distress before other people had served a writ, and who were considered the sharpest practitioners in the county. Old Dr. Munch had heard of the process of Messrs. Sheen and Nasmyth, and the dread of any of it being exercised on him originally prompted his offer to Andrew Joyce. He knew that he might count on an ally in Andrew Joyce's wife, a superior woman in very delicate health, who had great influence with her husband, and who was devoted to her only son. Mrs. Joyce, when Hester Baines, had been a Bible-class teacher in Spindleton, and had had herself a fair amount of education, would have had more, for she was a very earnest woman in her vocation, ever striving to gain more knowledge herself for the mere purpose of imparting it to others, but from her early youth she had been fighting with a spinal disease, to which she was gradually succumbing, so that although sour granite-faced Andrew Joyce was not the exact helpmate that the girl so full of love and trust would have chosen for herself, when he offered her his hand and his home, she was glad to avail herself of the protection thus afforded, and of the temporary peace which she could thus enjoy, until called, as she thought she should be, very speedily to her eternal rest.

That call did not come nearly as soon as Hester Baines had anticipated; not, indeed, until nearly a score of years after she gave up Bible-teaching, and became Andrew Joyce's wife. In the second year of her marriage a son was born to her, and thenceforward she lived for him, and for him alone. He was a small, delicate, sallow-faced boy, with enormous liquid eyes, and rich red lips, and a long throat, and thin limbs, and long skinny hands. A shy retiring lad, with an invincible dislike to society of any kind, even that of other boys; with a hatred of games, and fun; and an irrepressible tendency to hide away somewhere, anywhere, in an old lumber-room amid the disused trunks and broken clothes-horses, and general lumber, or under the wide-spreading branches of a tree, and then, extended prone on his stomach, to lie, with his head resting on his hands, and a book flat between his face-supporting arms. He got licked before he had been a week at the school, because he openly stated he did not like half-holidays, a doctrine which when first whispered among his schoolfellows was looked upon as incredible, but which, on proof of its promulgation, brought down upon its holder severe punishment. Despite of all Dr. Munch's somnolency and neglect, despite of all his class-fellows' idleness, ridicule, or contumely, young Joyce would learn, would make progress, would acquire accurate information in a very extraordinary way. When Mr. Ashurst assumed the reins of government at Helmingham Grammar School, the proficiency, promise, and industry of Walter Joyce were the only things that gave the new dominie the smallest gleam of interest in his new avocation. With the advent of the new head master Walter Joyce entered upon a new career; for the first time in his life he found some one to appreciate him, some one who could understand his work, praise what he had done, and encourage him to greater efforts. This had hitherto been wanting in the young man's life. His father liked to know that the boy "stuck to his book;" but was at last incapable of understanding what that sticking to the book produced, and his mother, though conscious that her son possessed talent such as she had always coveted for him, had no idea of the real extent of his learning. James Ashurst was the only one in Helmingham who could rate his scholar's gifts at their proper value, and the dominie's kind heart yearned with delight at the prospect of raising such a creditable flower of learning in such unpromising soil. He praised himself, not merely with the young man's present but with his future. It was his greatest hope that one of the scholarships at his old college should be gained by a pupil from Helmingham, and that that pupil should be Walter Joyce. Mr. Ashurst had been in communication with the college authorities on the subject; he had obtained a very unwilling assent—an assent that would have been a refusal had it not been for Mrs. Joyce's influence—from Walter's father that he would give his son an adequate sum for his maintenance at the University, and he was looking forward to a quick coming time when a scholarship should be vacant, for which he was certain Walter had a most excellent chance, when Mrs. Joyce had a fit and died. From that time forth Andrew Joyce was a changed man. He had loved his wife in his grim, sour, puritanical way, loved her sufficiently to strive against this grimness and puritanism to the extent of his consenting to live for the most part in the ordinary fashion of the world. But when that gentle influence was once removed, when the hard-headed, narrow-minded man had no longer the soft answer to turn away his wrath, the soft face to look appealingly up against his harsh judgment, the quick intellect to combat his one-sided dogmatisms, he fell away at once, and blossomed out as the bitter bigot into which he had gradually but surely been growing. No college education for his son then; no assistance for him from a bloated hierarchy, as he remarked at a public meeting, glancing at Mr. Sefton, the curate, who had eighty pounds a year and four children; no money of his to be spent by his son in a dissolute and debauched career at the university. Mr. Stoker had not been at any university—as, indeed, he had not, having picked up most of his limited education from a travelling tinker, who combined pot-mending and knife-grinding with Bible and tract selling—and where would you meet with a better preacher of the Gawspel, a more shining light, or a comelier vessel? Mr. Stoker was all in all to Andrew Joyce then, and when Andrew Joyce died, six months afterwards, it was found that, with the exception of the legacy of a couple of hundred pounds to his son, he had left all his money to Mr. Stoker, and to the chapel and charities represented by that erudite divine.

It was a sad blow to Walter Joyce, and almost as sharp a one to James Ashurst.

The two men—Walter was a man now—grieved together over the overturned hopes and the extinguished ambition. It was impossible for Walter to attempt to go to college just then. There was no scholarship vacant, and if there had been, the amount to be won might probably have been insufficient even for this modest youth. There was no help for it; he must give up the idea. What, then, was he to do? Mr. Ashurst answered that in his usual impulsive way. Walter should become under-master in the school. The number of boys had increased immensely. There was more work than he and Dr. Breitmann could manage; oh yes, he was sure of it, he had thought so a long time, and Walter should become third classical master, with a salary of sixty pounds a year, and board and lodging in Mr. Ashurst's house. It was a rash and wild suggestion, just likely to emanate from such a man as James Ashurst. The number of boys had increased, and Mr. Ashurst's energy had decreased; but there was Dr. Breitmann, a kindly, well-read, well-educated doctor of philosophy, from Leipzig; a fine classical scholar, though he pronounced "amo" as "ahmo," and "Dido" as "Taito;" a gentleman, though his clothes were threadbare, and he only ate meat once a week, and sometimes not then unless he were asked out; and a disciplinarian, though he smoked like a limekiln; a habit which in the Helmingham school-boys' eyes proclaimed the confirmed debauchee of the Giovanni or man-about-town type. Walter Joyce had been a favourite pupil of the doctor's, and was welcomed as a colleague by his old tutor with the utmost warmth. It was understood that his engagement was only temporary; he would soon have enough money to enable him, with a scholarship, to astonish the university, and then——! Meanwhile Mr. Ashurst and all around repeated that his talents were marvellous, and his future success indisputable.

That was the reason why Marian Ashurst fell in love with him. As has before been said, she thought nothing of outward appearance, although Walter Joyce had grown into a sufficiently comely man, small indeed, but with fine eyes and an eloquent mouth, and a neatly turned figure; nor, though a refined and educated girl, did she estimate his talents save for what they would bring. He was to make a success in his future life! that was what she thought of—her father said so, and so far in matters of cleverness and book learning, and so on, her father's opinion was worth something. Walter Joyce was to make money and position, the two things of which she thought, and dreamed, and hoped for, night and day. There was no one else among her acquaintance with his power. No farmer within the memory of living generations had done more than to keep up the homestead bequeathed to him whilst attempting to increase the number or the value of his fields; and even the gratification of her love of money would have been but a poor compensation to a girl of Marian's innate good breeding and refinement for being compelled to pass her life in the society of a boor or a churl. No! Walter Joyce combined the advantage of education and good looks, with the prospect of attaining wealth and distinction; he was her father's favourite, and was well thought of by everybody, and—and she loved him very much, and was delighted to comfort herself with the thought that in doing so she had not sacrificed any of what she was pleased to consider the guiding principles of her life.

And he, Walter Joyce, did he reciprocate, was he in love with Marian? Has it ever been your lot to see an ugly or, better still, what is called an ordinary man—for ugliness has become fashionable both in fiction and in society—to see an ordinary looking man hitherto politely ignored, if not snubbed, suddenly taken special notice of by a handsome woman, a recognised leader of her set, who, for some special purpose of her own, suddenly discovering that he has brains, or conversational power, or some peculiar fascination, singles him out from the surrounding ruck, steeps him in the sunlight of her eyes, and intoxicates him with the subtle wiles of her address? It does one good, it acts as a moral shower-bath, to see such a man under such circumstances. Your fine fellow simpers and purrs for a moment, and takes it all as real legitimate homage to his beauty; but the ordinary man cannot, so soon as he has got over his surprise at the sensation, cannot be too grateful, cannot find ways and means—cumbrous frequently and ungraceful, but eminently sincere—of showing his appreciation of the woman. Thus it was with Walter Joyce. The knowledge that he was a grocer's son had added immensely to the original shyness and sensitiveness of his disposition, and the free manner in which his frank and delicate personal appearance had been made the butt of out-

spoken "chaff" of the school-boys had made him singularly misogynistic. Since the early days of his youth, when he had been compelled to give a very unwilling attendance twice a week at the dancing academy of Mr. Hardy, where the boys of the Helmingham Grammar School had their manners softened, nor were suffered to become brutal, by the study of the terpsichorean art, in the company of the young ladies from the Misses Lewins' establishment, Walter Joyce had resolutely eschewed any and every charge of mixing in female society. He knew nothing of it, and pretended to despise it; it is needless to say, therefore, that so soon as he was brought into daily communication with a girl like Marian Ashurst, possessed both of beauty and refinement, he fell hopelessly in love with her, and gave up every thought, idea, and hope, save that in which she bore a part. She was his goddess, and he would worship her humbly and at a distance. It would be sufficient for him to touch the hem of her robe, to hear the sound of her voice, to gaze at her with big dilated eyes, which—not that he knew it—were eloquent with love, and tenderness, and worship.

Their love was known to each other, and to but very few else. Mr. Ashurst, looking up from his newspaper in the blessed interval between the departure of the boys to bed, and the modest little supper, the only meal which the family—in which Joyce was included—had in private, may have noticed the figures of his daughter and his usher, erst his favourite pupil, lingering in the deepening twilight round the lawn, or seen "their plighted shadows blended into one" in the soft rays of the moonlight. But, if he thought anything about it, he never made any remark. Life was very hard and very earnest with James Ashurst, and he may have found something softening and pleasing in this little bit of romance, something which he may have wished to leave undisturbed by worldly suggestions or practical hints. Or, he may have had no idea of what was actually going on. A man with an incipient disease beginning to tell upon him, with a sickly wife, and a perpetual striving not merely to make both ends meet, but to prevent them bursting so wide asunder as to leave a gap through which he must inevitably fall into ruin between them, has but little time, or opportunity, or inclination, for observing narrowly the conduct even of those near and dear to him. Mrs. Ashurst, in her invalid state, was only too glad to think that the few hours which Marian took in respite from attendance on her mother were pleasantly employed, to inquire where or in whose society they were passed. Neither Marian's family nor Joyce kept any company by whom their absence would be noticed; and as for the villagers, they had fully made up their minds on the one side that Marian was determined to make a splendid match; on the other, that the mere fact of Walter Joyce's scholarship was so great as to incapacitate him from the pursuit of ordinary human frailties: so that not the ghost of a speculation as to the relative position of the couple had arisen amongst them. And the two young people loved, and hoped, and erected their little castles in the air, which were palatial indeed as hope-depicted by Marian, though less ambitious as limned by Walter Joyce, when Mr. Ashurst's death came upon them like a thunderbolt, and blew their unsubstantial edifices into the air.

See them here on this calm summer evening, pacing round and round the lawn, as they used to do, in the old days already ages ago as it seems, when James Ashurst, newspaper in hand, would throw occasional glances at them from the study window. Marian, instead of letting her fingers lightly touch her companion's wrist, as is her wont, has passed her arm through his, and her fingers are clasped together round it, and she looks up in his face, as they come to a standstill beneath the big outspread branches of the old oak, with an earnest tearful gaze such as she has seldom, if ever, worn before. There must be matter of moment between these two just now, for Joyce's face looks wan and worn; there are deep hollows beneath his large eyes, and he strives ineffectually to conceal, with an occasional movement of his hand, the rapid anxious play of the muscles round his mouth. Marian is the first to speak.

"And so you take Mr. Benthall's decision as final, Walter, and are determined to go to London?"

"Darling, what else can I do? Here is Mr. Benthall's letter, in which he tells me that, without the least wish to disturb me—a mere polite phrase that—he shall bring his own assistant master to Helmingham. He writes, and means kindly, I've no doubt—but here's the fact!"

"Oh, yes, I'm sure he's a gentleman, Walter; his letter to mamma proves that,

offering to defer his arrival at the schoolhouse until our own time. Of course that is impossible, and we go into Mr. Swainson's lodgings at once."

"My dearest Marian, my own pet, I hate to think of you in lodgings; I cannot bear to picture you so!"

"You must make haste and get your position, and take me to share it, then, Walter!" said the girl, with a half melancholy smile; "you must do great things, Walter. Dear papa always said you would, and you must prove how right he was!"

"Dearest, your poor father calculated on my success at college for the furtherance of my fortune, and now all that chance is over! Whatever I do now must be——"

"By the aid of your own talent and industry, exactly the same appliances which you had to rely on if you had gone to the university, Walter. You don't fear the result? you're not alarmed and desponding at the turn which affairs have taken? It's impossible you can fail to attain distinction, and—and money and—and position, Walter—you must,—don't you feel it?—you must!"

"Yes, dear, I feel it; I hope—I think! perhaps not so strongly, so enthusiastically as you do. You see,—don't be downcast, Marian, but it's best to look these things in the face, darling!—all I can try to get is a tutor's, or an usher's, or a secretary's place, and in any of these the want of the university stamp is heavily against me. There's no disguising that, Marian!"

"Oh, indeed; is that so?"

"Yes, child, undoubtedly. The university degree is like the hall mark in silver, and I'm afraid I shall find very few persons willing to accept me as the genuine article without it."

"And all this risk might have been avoided if your father had only——"

"Well, yes; but then, Marian darling, if my father had left me money to go to college immediately on his death I should never have known you—known you, I mean, as you are, the dearest and sweetest of women."

He drew her to him as he spoke and pressed his lips on her forehead. She received the kiss without any undue emotion, and said:

"Perhaps that had been for the best, Walter."

"Marian, that's rank blasphemy. Fancy my hearing that, especially, too, on the night of my parting with you! No, my darling, all I want you to have is hope, hope and courage, and not too much ambition, dearest. Mine has been comparatively but a lotus-eating existence hitherto; to-morrow I begin the battle of life."

"But slightly armed for the conflict, my poor Walter!"

"I don't allow that, Marian. Youth, health, and energy are not bad weapons to have on one's side, and with your love in the background——"

"And the chance of achieving fame and fortune for yourself—keep that in the foreground!"

"That is to me, in every way, less than the other, but it is of course an additional spur. And now——"

And then? When two lovers are on the eve of parting, their conversation is scarcely very interesting to any one else. Marian and Walter talked the usual pleasant nonsense, and vowed the usual constancy, took four separate farewells of each other, and parted, with broken accents, and lingering hand-clasps, and streaming eyes. But when Marian Ashurst sat before her toilette-glass that night, in the room which had so long been her own, and which she was so soon to vacate, she thought of what Walter Joyce had said as to his future, and wondered whether, after all, she had not miscalculated the strength, not the courage, of the knight whom she had selected to wear her colours in his helm in the great contest.

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD ONES.

It is a fact, concerning the soundness of which there can be no doubt, that we all keep by us, among our possessions, a considerable number of objects which we do not want, for which we have no possible use, which are very much in our way, and which we would be exceedingly glad to be rid of, if we only knew how. Some people, with little space at their disposal, have been so encumbered in this way with large accumulations of rubbish, inherited from many generations of collectors, that they have even been heard, after a day spent in futile attempts to deal with these unvalued possessions, to express, in the bitterness of their souls, a longing for a "judicious fire" to break out in the house. In default of that great comfort, it would be an excellent arrangement if a perambulating furnace could be brought round, at certain intervals, and moored for a time before our doors.

Incremation of this sort, however, is a way out of the difficulty only available in certain cases. Some kinds of rubbish are hardly suitable for burning. Metallic rubbish, earthenware rubbish, bone and ivory rubbish, old door

handles, disabled locks, bunches of obsolete keys, superseded door knockers, ancient jam pots, broken china figures, plaster casts without noses, empty ink jars, medicine bottles half full of mixture which was to be taken three times a day and wasn't, worn-out toothbrush handles, knobs that have come off everything that could have a knob, handles of everything that could have a handle—handles of parasols, of button hooks, of butter knives, of paper knives, of water jugs, of tea pots. There are, besides such mere rubbish and refuse, certain objects which belong to most people, which are of some—occasionally of great—intrinsic value, but which we don't in the slightest degree appreciate, and secretly yearn to be delivered from. There is the pair of vases for the chimneypiece, which were given you on your marriage day, and which, entirely destroying the effect of your drawing-room, you have banished to a bedroom, where they are bitterly in the way. There is the set of dining-room chairs, bought by yourself, with your eyes open, when you paid away hard money—and a good deal of it—in order that you might become possessed of what you detest from the bottom of your soul. There is that claret-coloured surtout, which will not answer at all, and which is not likely to wear out, because you never put it on; also, the pair of unmentionables, the material of which, when they were brought home, turned out to be so much more violent in colour than it looked in the tailor's pattern-book. What are you to do with such things as these? You cannot burn a whole set of dining-room chairs, or a claret-coloured surtout; and you don't like the idea of selling them, because, if it got about, your friends would at once come to the conclusion that you were on the eve of bankruptcy, and so your social position might suffer. What are you to do?

What you are to do is simply this: You are to advertise in a journal called The Exchange and Mart. You are to advertise that you are willing to barter these objects which are harassing the life out of you, for certain other objects, which you specify, and which are equally harrowing to their present proprietor.

The Exchange and Mart is a weekly periodical, which has been in existence something over six months. The object with which this journal has been started may be best explained by a quotation from the first page of the work itself:

"The Exchange and Mart Journal" has been established to provide a medium between the seller and buyer, and at a very cheap rate to enable any one who wishes to dispose of any article, either by exchange or by sale, to do so to the very best advantage.

It will be desirable to give a short explanation of our scheme, so that intending advertisers may the more easily avail themselves of the advantages we offer.

First, let us suppose a person wishing to effect an exchange through our columns, he will write to the editor thus: Sir, I wish to make the following exchange (*Here follows the list of articles to be exchanged*), for which I enclose——stamps (*enclosing the number of stamps as per regulations*). If the advertiser chooses to add his own name and address, he can of course do so; but supposing he should wish to keep it secret, he will then send *us* his name and address, and we shall attach a number to his advertisement, in place of his name, and all letters answering his advertisement will therefore be addressed to that number at our office. In addition to this, the advertiser can, if he wish, send the article advertised for exchange to our office on view. The same rules apply to the department of "The Mart," with this addition, that a charge of five per cent will be made on all articles sold at our office. As to the department of "Wants and Vacancies," the desirability of having some organ where servants and masters can be brought into communication at a merely nominal cost, is too obvious to need demonstration.

It will be seen here that not only do the originators of this scheme take the interests of their clients very much to heart, but that great consideration for their feelings is also exhibited, and ample provision made for that tendency to shrink from observation which ever besets the amateur seller, and which we see provided against by the pawnbroking fraternity in the shape of those private doors round the corner, always inseparable from such of their establishments as are found in our genteeler neighbourhoods.

Some plain directions to intending advertisers follow:

Let us now proceed to point out the course to be pursued by any persons answering the advertisements; and first as regards "The Exchange." The person answering an advertisement of Exchange must enclose that answer, stamped, and with the distinguishing number of the advertisement clearly written upon the top of it, under cover to the editor of The Exchange and Mart, who will thus bring the two parties into communication. The same course of procedure applies to "The Mart."

To ensure that the advertisement should be widely seen, we guarantee *a minimum circulation of ten thousand weekly.*"

That last "guarantee" is a bold one, and shows that the proprietors of the undertaking regard the class which is ready to fly to ills it knows not of, rather than to endure those which it has, as rather a large one. And, indeed, judging from the advertisements which fill more than a dozen large columns of this wonderful journal, it would seem to be so. It is pathetic to observe how—the means of making their miseries known having at length come in their way—the proprietors of all sorts of detested objects hurry forward in search of deliverance from their passive tormentors. The present writer once went to see the "Home for Lost and Starving Dogs;" and as soon as he appeared in the yard, every one of those poor ownerless wretches rushed headlong to the bars behind which they were confined, each imagining that his especial proprietor had at last turned up. So with these advertisers. They were pining hopeless among those fatal possessions, when suddenly the proprietors of The Exchange and Mart appeared on the scene with signals of deliverance; and instantly the advertisers flung themselves at their feet, frantic with gratitude and hope. "Rescue me from this concertina, which I can't play!" cries one. "Deliver me from this statuette, the sight of which is killing me by inches!" shrieks another. "This gun," groans a third, "with

which I have never shot anything! Remove it from above my chimneypiece, and take a load from my heart!"

The advertisers who seek to make their wants known through the pages of The Exchange and Mart, seem to possess many characteristics in common. The same articles appear to be popular and unpopular with them. They all want sealskin jackets and sewing-machines, and none of them want incomplete pieces of Berlin wool work, and "boxes of oil paints nearly new." There is, by the way, a very brisk desire to get rid of these last, suggesting the idea that a considerable proportion of the advertisers have been the victims of a false impression that they had a vocation for art. Sometimes the revulsion of feeling brought about by the acquirement of these "paints" is very strong indeed, as in the case of an advertiser in the twentieth number of The Exchange, who suddenly discovers, after cultivating for a brief space the peaceful arts that soften men's manners, a certain blood-thirsty tendency, at once incongruous and terrible. "I have," says this gentleman, "an oil-paint box almost complete, and *very little used*. I want a small breech-loading revolver."

Among the characteristics shared in common by the clients of the Exchange journal must be noted a wonderful and touching hopefulness. They are so inexplicably sanguine. They see nothing outrageous in the idea of getting new lamps for old ones. The lamps they have to dispose of are very old ones, and they know it. The wares they offer for competition are, for the most part, no doubt, defective, imperfect, and disappointing; yet they expect that the objects which they are to get in exchange for them are to possess none of those qualities. Here is a wonderful instance of this hopefulness. It is headed "GOATS!"

"Three pure white Sicilian goats to be exchanged for a lock-stitch sewing-machine, Wilson preferred, in perfect condition."

A gentleman or lady possessed of a sewing-machine, by the best maker, *in perfect condition*, is expected to part with it, and to receive in return—three terrible goats! Is this a thing likely to happen? Is it likely, again, that the advertiser who has "a fine tame fox, which he wishes to exchange for a gold watch or guard," will meet with a customer? Or that the proprietor of an ivory card-case is to be able to exchange it, or "two pieces of Chinese and Japanese embroidery" for a "Cleopatra" or a "Wanzer" sewing-machine, in good order?

These sewing-machines are in continual request. In one copy of The Exchange there are no less than eleven advertisements for these useful articles, for which the most various and incongruous things—guitars, celestial and terrestrial globes, bantam cocks, and magic lanterns, among the rest—are offered in exchange.

This incongruity between the object offered and that which is advertised for, is another of the curiosities of advertisement which the new journal supplies us with. Besides such instances as have been already mentioned, we find such notices as the following, in plenty: "Butter-dish of carved white wood, with green glass centre, quite new, never used, cost eight shillings and sixpence. To exchange for Mendelssohn's Lieder ohne Worte; or a pair of lady's skates, or a round brass American clock, or a carved fretwork brooch, or Tennyson's poems." "I will give forty pencil drawings," says one advertiser, "all good, some excellent, for twelve pounds of good honey!" "'Raising the Maypole,' quite new," says another; "size, forty inches by thirty inches. Wanted *blankets*, or offers." Another advertiser wishes to change a pair of archery targets for a good guitar; another, to become possessed of a small revolver in place of Knight's Natural History; another to exchange a handsome lever gold watch and seals, for—a cow!

Among the remarkable points to which one's attention is frequently drawn in considering these notices, is the exceeding popularity of sealskin. The advertisements for sealskin jackets, sealskin muffs, sealskin waistcoats, sealskin purses, follow one another in close succession, and are even more numerous than those for sewing-machines. Neither do the owners of the former, any more than the latter, appear to tire of such possessions, or wish to be rid of them. There are no instances of advertisers wishing to part, either with sealskin jackets or sewing-machines.

Occupying ourselves still with the especial peculiarities developed in the columns of this curious periodical, one cannot help noticing what a rare quality accuracy and intelligibility in written description is. This is manifested by the Exchange advertisers, both in describing the objects they wish to part with, and those of which they desire to become possessed. Thus, there are advertisers who announce their possession of a "very good long thick watch-chain," without specifying of what metal it is composed; others, who are in want of a yard "or so" of piece silk; others, who yearn for a large new album, "to hold four in a page"—four what? Some of the descriptions, too, are very minute in detail, and some characterised by a certain conscientiousness. A set of steel ornaments, for instance, which are "slightly rusty," are advertised; and a lace shawl, a "little soiled;" while one advertiser, in her desire to be strictly honest, enters into quite a little narrative of the autobiographical sort: "I have," she says, "a good bracelet, bought at the Exhibition in '62. I do not know of what metal it is made, but I think it cannot be plated, as I have worn one bought at the same time, a great deal, and it has not in the least turned colour."

Some people are possessed of very hopeless goods indeed, and seem to be perfectly conscious of their unfortunate position. Here is an unhappy case: "I have ten gross of plate-powder, each in packet boxes. I wish to exchange for anything useful. Open to offers." And here another: "I have about a hundred different, mostly freethought, pamphlets, average price sixpence, which I would exchange for anything useful worth a guinea."

The strange phenomena, connected with the stamp-collecting mania, are among the peculiarities developed in these pages. Extraordinary revelations are made, of the patience and perseverance exhibited by "collectors" of this kind. Some of these advertise, for exchange, books containing upwards of five hundred stamps, foreign and colonial, or eight hundred postmarks in an album. Is it conceivable that anybody can want eight hundred postmarks? Another collector offers "a book with double clasps, containing one thousand and seventy arms, crests, and monograms, all coloured; Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, arms of all nations, county arms, nearly all the army, militia, volunteer, schools, &c." There are, likewise, strange and terrible treasures of the monogram and stamp kind, and some very mysterious matters indeed, which are called "eccentrics." Here is a fearfully mystifying announcement: "I have twenty military badges, and Adam and Eve eccentric, to exchange for others; or would give two badges for Tom Dawson's cat, Miss Senhouse, Miss Charlton's fan, Mr. Milbank's eccentric." Mr. Tom Dawson's cat is the subject of another advertisement, and is evidently a much prized and well-known specimen among "eccentrics."

Through the agency of the department of this Periodical, called the "Exchange," persons encumbered may get a different set of objects more suitable to their wants; while another department of the Journal, "The Mart," affords them a chance of turning these same unappreciated wares into money. It is probably a good thing that such a system as this should be in existence, for even if the parties to these transactions do not acquire any very valuable additions to the number of their possessions, they at least get a change in the nature of their encumbrances, and that is something. For, even if you skip out of the frying-pan into the fire, it must still be admitted that you do get a change, and perhaps — though the general opinion seems to run the other way—a change not altogether for the worse.

THE HALL PORTER AT THE CLUB.

"How long, good friend, have you sat here,
A warder at the door,
To let none pass but the elect
Into the inner floor?"—
"I think 'tis thirty years at least;
I came in manly prime,
And now I'm growing frail and old,
And feel the touch of Time.

"Many's the change that I have seen
Since first I entered here;
A thousand merry gentlemen
Were members in that year.
And of the thousand there remain
Scarce fifty that I know;
And they are growing old like me,
And hobble as they go.

"Seven hundred underneath the sod,
The great, the rich, the free;—
A hundred fallen on evil days,
Too poor to pay the fee.
Fifty resigned because their wives
Forbade them to remain;—
And half a score went moody mad
From overwork of brain.

"And two committed suicide,—
One for a faithless wife,
And one for fear to face the law
That could not take his life.
But why run o'er the mournful list?
Each month that passes round,
Sees some old leaf from this old tree
Fall fluttering to the ground.

"And you, my friend, who question me,
Are young, and hale, and strong,
You'll have such memories as mine
If you but live as long!"——
"Well! well! I know! Why moralise?
Or go in search of sorrow?
Here's half a crown to drink my health;
And better luck to-morrow!"

MY VERSION OF POOR JACK.

THE "Poor Jack" of whom I write is not a sailor, though perhaps for him also, as well as for the Poor Jack whom Charles Dibdin has immortalised, there may be a sweet little cherub sitting up aloft. My Poor Jack is a landsman, and, although he will not admit the fact, a beggar. There is this much to be said for his denial of the truth, that he is to a certain extent a trader, and that in the summer months and the early autumn he does a certain amount of profitable business—profitable from his humble point of view, though never sufficiently remunerative to enable him to deal with either the tailor or the shoemaker. His whole attire is eleemosynary, and his raggedness, though doubtless very uncomfortable to himself, is exceedingly picturesque, and might, if any good artist happened to fall in with him, procure for him the honour of a sitting, and such reward in silver as the pose might be worth. Jack is sixty-five years of age, and has a large handsome brown beard, striped rather than sprinkled with grey. Though I have known him for three or four years, I never saw him but once without his hat on—a very battered and tattered one it is—and then I discovered that his beard was the only hirsuteness he could exhibit, and that, in fact, his head was as bald and devoid of hair as a basin. His elbows peep out from his sleeves, and his toes from his miserable old shoes, and his general raggedness is as looped and windowed as that which Lear pitied and Shakespeare described. In his youth Poor Jack was a carpenter, but he has not done a stroke of carpenter's work for upwards of forty years, having, as he says, been disabled at five-and-twenty by

rheumatism in his right shoulder and hand and in both of his feet—rheumatism so long neglected or so imperfectly treated as to have become chronic and incurable. Having no money to set up a shop, and no friends to help him, he had betaken himself to the road to live by what he could pick up; not perhaps without reliance upon the sweet little cherub already mentioned, or on the Providence that takes account of men as well as of sparrows.

Poor Jack called upon me a few weeks ago with a basket of mushrooms that he had gathered in the fields, having a standing commission from me to give me the first offer of these dainties whenever he can find sufficient for a dish. The last time I had seen him prior to this visit, was about six weeks previously, when I had come across him in a byway, sitting by the side of a ditch, and very drunk indeed. I reminded him (perhaps unnecessarily) of the fact, but as I had bought his mushrooms at a good price, he was not offended.

"Yes," said he, "I remember; I was main drunk. I think I was never so drunk in all my life before. It was with *champagne*."

"Champagne?" I repeated incredulously.

"Yes, champagne; and not bad stuff neither, though it did make me uncommon ill."

Jack went on to explain that there had been a large pic-nic party upon the hill that day, at which nearly two hundred people were present, dispersed in groups under the trees. As attendance upon pic-nics is part of his regular business, he was, as he said, "to the fore" on this occasion, to take his chance either of being ruthlessly driven away, as he sometimes is for his utter incongruity with surrounding circumstances, or of being employed, as he mostly is, in some way or other, or of obtaining a share of the broken victuals and remnants of the feast. Jack had been plashing about all the morning in the little river that winds and murmurs under the hill-side, and had the large basket, which is usually slung at his back, filled with fresh forget-me-nots, which he had gathered on the banks of the stream. Young ladies—romantic little dears!—love the forget-me-not more for its name than for its beauty, and Jack's venture among the merry-makers with such an abundant supply of a flower so suggestive to love-makers proved to be a success. One young gentleman gave him a shilling for a bunch, which he forthwith presented to a young lady, and such a desire for forget-me-nots took possession of all the other ladies, young and old, that the gentlemen in attendance, as in gallantry and duty bound, made all haste to gratify their wishes. The consequence was that Jack's forget-me-nots were speedily sold at highly remunerative prices, and he found himself in possession of nearly twelve shillings. "It was the best day's work I ever did in my life," said Jack; "nor was this all. Pic-nic people, though they generally bring plenty of wine, ale, or ginger-beer with them, always manage to forget to bring water; and this party had not a drop. One of the ladies asked me if I could get some, and a gentleman sitting next to her on the grass offered to give me a bottle of champagne in exchange for six bottles of cold pump water. They had the water, and I had the wine. I had heard of champagne, but I had never tasted a drop in my life. They all laughed to see me drinking it. Let them laugh as wins, thought I, as I sat under a tree by myself, and drank out of the bottle."

"You liked it, of course?"

"Liked it! It was glorious, and did me a power of good; leastways, I think it would have done if I had stuck to the one bottle. But I amused the gentlemen, I suppose, and made fun for them, so they gave me more, and more again upon the top of that, till my head began to spin and swim, and I felt that I was going to be very unwell. How I got away I don't remember, but I was main ill, and after a while I fell asleep where you saw me. When I woke it was pitch dark, and I heard the church clock at Darkham strike three in the morning."

"Darkham," said I; "where's that? You mean Dorking."

"No," replied Jack, very dictatorially, and as if sure of his point. "Some people say Dorking, others say Darking, *I* say *Darkham*."

Jack had begun to interest me, for if I have a favourite hobby it is philology, and I had long had a suspicion that the modern name of this pretty little town was not the correct one.

"Did you ever hear any one else call it Darkham?"

"Yes, my father and my mother, and scores of people. There is Mickleham, and Effingham, and Brockham, and Bookham, and *Darkham*, all in a string, as I might say."

"Have you any idea what Darkham means? Bookham means the home among the beech-trees, Brockham the home by

the brook, Mickleham the great home, and Effingham is probably Upping home; but what is Darkham?"

"The dark home," said Jack, as if the question were settled.

"No, that's not it, though I think you may be right about the name. Darag or Darach is the old Celtic for oak, and Darkham is the home among the oak-trees."

"You've got it now," said Jack. "That's it for sartain."

I have had many talks with Jack, and have taken considerable interest in his humble fortunes. As soon as the leaves fall from the trees and the nights begin to grow cold and frosty, Jack retires from the busy world into his winter palace. That palace is the workhouse, or rather the workhouse infirmary; for Jack cannot work if he would, and his rheumatism or poor man's gout—he does not exactly know to which of the two names his inveterate malady is properly entitled—requires the treatment that none but the parish doctor and the parish funds will supply. But as soon as the cuckoo is heard in the woods, Jack, after a hybernation which he has shared with the flies, the bees, the dormice, and other of God's creatures, which are mercifully permitted to sleep all through the season when no food is to be found for them, emerges once again into the light of day to ply his vocation. He looks so very miserable, and so picturesque, that many kind-hearted people stop him on the road, and give him either of their own poverty or of their riches the wherewithal to make himself a little more comfortable. But he never asks for charity. For this reason he denies being a beggar—a figment, a white lie, a suppressio veri, whatever it may be called, which does no harm to anybody, while it administers very sensibly to the little pride that the world and old age and hard struggles have left in him. It is his wish to earn an honest subsistence, and he does his best in that direction, and with a very patient, humble, and uncomplaining spirit. The first objects of his solicitude as soon as he is emancipated from his winter thraldom are the primrose roots and flowers, with which he drives his small bargains in the towns and villages with people who want to ornament their little front gardens or their cottage windows, and which he sells for what he can get—for a penny or a halfpenny a root, or for a piece of bread, or, better still, for a pair of old boots or shoes, or any cast-off garment that may be too ragged for the poorest of the poor, but which is not utterly valueless to such as he. He also collects herbs, or, as he calls them, "yarbs," either for the garden or for the use of the poor people and the notable housewives among them, who have faith in simples for his treatment and cure of burns and scalds or other simple maladies. Though, unlike Milton's herbalist, he cannot

> Ope his leathern scrip,
> And show us simples of a thousand names,

he can display some dozens of varieties in his basket, and can tell what they were supposed to be good for. One day he got an order from a village apothecary for cartloads of groundsel, if he could collect as much, and was busy on the job for a whole fortnight. It was wanted for a military hospital for the purpose of making poultices. But he never received so extensive an order again. Ferns and orchids were other sources of income, and last, but by no means the least, were watercresses and mushrooms. Jack has no faith in the new-fangled ideas about mushrooms, and does not believe that there is more than one kind in England that is edible. "Mushrooms," said he, with a conservatism strongly opposed to the radicalism of the present day, that will not allow us our ancient faith even in fungi, "have been growing in the English meadows for a thousand years, and if there were more than one sort good for eating, do you think our grandfathers and their grandfathers would not have found it out? No, no!" he added, with strong emphasis, "there is only one mushroom: all the others are toadstools: and I won't believe otherwise if all the doctors in England says the contrary."

There is a suspicion afloat, that in his early manhood, and when he first took to the road, Jack got into trouble, and was had before a justice of the peace for poaching. But the suspicion is too vague and shadowy to merit much notice. I have tried more than once to get him on the subject of the Game Laws, as affecting people in his circumstances and the rural population generally; but he has always evaded it, and expressed no opinion, or even made a remark, except "that he did not understand about that." Jack can read, and has a small, dog's-eared, and very shabby-looking and well-thumbed Bible, which he carries in his basket, and reads every Sunday in the fields, out of the public path somewhere, when the weather is fine, and he has enough bread-and-cheese or scraps of victuals in his pocket to serve for his dinner. He never goes to church in the summer when he is a free man, having been, he

says, turned from the door of a church some years ago by the beadle, who told him he was much too dirty to come in. "Perhaps what he said was true," observed Jack, when he told me the circumstance; "but I thought all the same, that I might have been allowed to go into a corner. Howsomever, I went away, and sat upon a tombstone to rest myself out of the beadle's sight, and hear the organ play, and thought that, maybe, when I was put under the mould, I might be as clean as Mr. Beadle or Mr. Parson, or any of the grand folks in the pews! And I think so still, though, as I said, it was a good many years ago, and I was not so near the mould as I am now." But though Jack avoids church in summer, he regularly attends the service in the Union during the winter months, and seems, from the manner in which he speaks of the sermons he hears, to be quite as good a Christian as his betters, who "fare sumptuously every day."

The last time I saw Jack he was on his way to the union workhouse for the winter, when he showed me the ticket of admission duly signed by the relieving officer.

"I am afraid," he said, "I shall not come out again; though I shall be glad to see the primroses and hear the cuckoo once more. I don't think I have been a very bad man, though once, and only once in my life, I had a pheasant for dinner."

I thought Jack was going to talk about that poaching business at last; but he hesitated, and pulled up suddenly.

"No! I have not been a very bad man; and if I have not worked as hard as other people, it is because I have not been able to work."

"Well, Jack!" I said, "your life has been a hard one, I have no doubt. But I never knew much harm of you; and I suppose that, like the rest of us, you have had your joys as well as your sorrows."

"There was a young woman," he said —but he did *not* wipe his eye with his cuff, nor whimper—"who was very fond of me, and she died when I was twenty and she was eighteen. Since that time the best things I have known in the world have been the sunshine and the warm weather. It is very hard to be poor, and lonely, and cold. Cold, as far as I know, is the worst of all—worse than hunger; at least I've found it so. And if it were not for the cold, I don't think I'd go to the Union at all, but would try and jog along in the winter as I do in the summer."

Poor Jack, it will be seen, though he has a certain amount of pride, has not a very high spirit—how could he have, with such a hopeless battle to fight?—and by no means despises the workhouse, or thinks it derogatory to his manly dignity as some of the hard-working poor do, to depend upon it for assistance. Without its kindly hand, however, he would doubtless die in the cold December—of "serum on the brain," as the parish doctors have lately taken to call starvation. So small blame be to him for going into it when he must, and for coming out of it when he can. In spite of his last fit of despondency, I hope to see the old fellow out again in the spring, along with his favourite primroses, listening to the cuckoo, gathering simples, and drawing such comfort out of the sunshine as Diogenes may have done, but without the misanthropy, that perhaps was not real, even with Diogenes.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. HOUNSLOW HEATH.

[We purpose, in a rapid series of papers, to fly with the crow in various directions from London, and take a bird's-eye view of the roads as they have been.]

Swift in a phantom mail coach, the ghosts of four "spankers" whirl us along the great west road. The phantom guard blows a faint blast on his phantom horn as we dash down the long dingy street of Brentford, and sweep on with whizzing wheels between the broad nursery gardens. Here and there, a ladder reared against the fruit tree boughs, shows where the last russets and leather jackets have just been picked for all-devouring London. Faster, through Brentford, where the ghosts of Hogarth's time seem for ever grouped around the doorway of that quaint inn, The London Apprentice. On past the river almshouses and the little garden by which the dark barge sails flit; on between the rows of shops and the gables of the small town at the Duke's Gate, and we are at Hounslow and on legendary ground.

Were we magicians we should at once call together the dispersed atoms of the highwaymen who rattled in chains above the Hounslow furze bushes. From the roots of the fir trees, and the earth beneath the brambles, from the flints of the road side and the water of the rivulets, we would collect the fragments of the wicked bodies, until once more the "Captain" who swore "by the bones of Jerry Abershaw" should appear in his black mask, gold-laced cocked hat, and scarlet roquelaure, with his silver "pops" in his deep pockets, bestriding his chesnut mare, the bold and reckless rascal of the pleasant days when thirteen gibbets stood at one time near Bason Bridge on the road to Heston. Yes! Thirteen shapeless bundles, dangled at one time in view of the wayfarer across the terrible heath, in the beginning of this century. It was an old joke against Lord Islay, who once

lived at Hounslow, that, on his ordering his gardener to cut an avenue to open a view, the perspective disclosed a gibbet with a thief on it, and that several members of the Campbell family having died with their shoes on, the prospect revived such ominous and unpleasant reminiscences that Lord Islay instantly ordered the prospect to be closed again with a clump of thick Scotch firs.

If any highwayman who galloped to the gallows a century ago, could see Hounslow Heath now, he would wonder where the four thousand acres that covered fourteen parishes had shrunk to. He would find only a few dozen acres of grass field enclosed for the cavalry reviews on one side of the road, and a few dozen acres of rough furze and bramble on the other for cavalry drill. Local historians say that the heath was once an oak forest that spread its green boughs from Staines to Brentford, and there is an old tradition that the last wolf killed, centuries ago now, was hunted down at Perry Oaks, near Feltham Hill.

In Charles the First's time Hounslow contained one hundred and twenty houses, chiefly inns and ale-houses relying on travellers. It was always indeed dependent on the coaches of the great west road. Every third house is still an inn or a beer shop. Ruined stables, faded signs of the Marquis of Granby and other bygone celebrities, still testify to the old prosperity of the place, when the Comet used to come flashing in, five minutes under the hour, from Piccadilly.

Let us sketch the Comet of the old days. Tom Brown, the coachman, allows only fifty seconds for changing horses—smart's the word with him. Tom in the neat white hat, the clean doeskin gloves, the well cut trousers and dapper frock — we quote a contemporaneous portrait—is the pink of Jarvies. The coach is a strong, well-built, canary-coloured drag: a bull's head on the doors: a Saracen's head on the hind boot. It carries fourteen passengers and goes ten miles an hour, guaranteed pace. There is a big bell-mouthed blunderbuss, ready for the Turpin boys; there are two pistols in the cases; there is a lamp on each side the coach, and another gleams out under the footboard. In fifty seconds three greys and a piebald have replaced the three chesnuts and a bay.

The ostler fastens the last buckle; the coachman's foot is already on the roller bolt.

"How is Paddy's leg?" he asks, as he settles down to his seat and shakes out the reins.

"Nearly right, sir," replies the horse-keeper, twitching off the last cloth.

"Let 'em go, then," says the great artist, "and take care of yourselves."

The spankers strike out and away they go, over what coachmen used to call "the hospital ground," from Hounslow to Staines. The coachman generally *sprang* his cattle over this bit of level, where there was no pebble bigger than a nutmeg. They kept for it all the "box-kickers" and stiff-mouthed old platers, whose backs would not hold an ounce down hill or draw an ounce up—queer tempered creatures, that were over the pole one day and over the bars the next. So they used to flash past the Scotch firs where Mr. Steele was murdered, and the pond where Mr. Mellish was killed, and by the turn where Courthorpe Knatchbull beat off the four scoundrels, and the place where Turpin, according to Mr. Samuel Weller, let fly at the bishop's too hasty coachman:

> And just put a couple of balls in his nob,
> And perwailed on him to stop.

The crow takes note, upon the wing, of a pretty tradition of Hounslow which addresses itself to the human heart. During those cruel wars that brought the king's army and the parliamentarians alternately to encamp on Hounslow Heath, one Mr. George Trevelyan, a cavalier gentleman of Nettlecomb, in Somersetshire, and suspected of plotting against Cromwell, was seized by puritan soldiers, and sent close prisoner to the Tower. His captors, took care, moreover, to burn and destroy all of his property that they could, and, above all, drove off with them from the stables and fields of Nettlecomb and its neighbourhood, every horse that would mount a dragoon, or drag a cannon, or a baggage waggon. They left the old house beggared, ransacked, and defaced, and rode off singing their sullen psalms. Heaven and earth was moved for Trevelyan's release by his devoted wife; but Cromwell, bent on breaking such stubborn spirits, would not listen to any less ransom than two thousand pounds. But where to get it? The faithful steward racked his brains, and the poor wife wrought and prayed ceaselessly in her great need. Farms were sold, old oaks were felled, dear heirlooms were beaten down for the goldsmith and the Jews; above all, as the old record especially notes, "the great Barley Mow" was taken to market. The two thousand gold pieces were at last spread by the delighted steward before the eyes of the tearful wife. The difficulty now, was, how to get the bags of gold safe up to London, and escape the hungry highwaymen of Bagshot and Hounslow, the rapacious constables of hostile towns, and the stray snatchers in inn yards? At last Heaven sent a thought to her heart. She had heard of rough roads where ladies had harnessed strong draught oxen to the cumbrous family coaches, to drag them through the sloughs and deep-rutted lanes to some great dance or solemn assembly. The horses were all gone for miles round. The thought was at once turned to action. The great "gold" coach was provisioned for the long journey, the faithful steward, true as steel, accompanied the loving wife; and they took twenty-eight days doing the hundred and sixty miles. The dark prison doors flew open. The loving wife flew into the arms of her free husband. But she sickened of small-pox at Hounslow—the first halting place for the swift homeward horses as it had been the last for the slow oxen—and she died breathing the name which had been the watchword of her great devotion. She was buried at Hounslow, on the site of the home of the old Brotherhood

of the Trinity, who had devoted their lives to the redeeming of captives; and in the church a simple tablet still exists to her memory, recording only the fact of her burial and the names of her children.

From the earliest records, Hounslow Heath was a notorious ride for highwaymen. Whether it was on this heath that Claude Duval, really made the knight's lady dance a coranto, and then charged the husband a hundred pounds for it, may be uncertain; but it is certain that Captain Hind, who tried to stop Cromwell, and who did rob Bradshaw and Harrison, infested this wild common. The gallant captain was eventually hung at Worcester, and his head was set up, as a scarecrow to gentlemen of his kidney, over the bridge gate. Hind fought for the king at Worcester, and when the hue and cry was hot after him, artfully and daringly came to London, called himself Brown, changed his wig, dyed his face, and took lodgings at a barber's opposite St. Dunstan's Church; but the worthless barber betrayed the gallant rogue, who swung for it.

There was seldom great daring in the robberies of the highwaymen. They were but poor humbugs. They had houses of intelligence; they had ostlers, drivers of waggons and packhorses, innkeepers, barmaids, turnpike men, and carriers, in their pay. They did not attack armed travellers if they could help it, and when they did so they generally did it by surprise or by force of numbers. They obtained heavy purses and rich boxes of plate, but they had to cast money away by handfuls to their spies and to the constables who tolerated them or aided their escapes. Wild drinking and gambling were the desperate reactions from their dangers and their days of starvation and short commons. Then came the gallops, the short cuts, the flying of gates and brooks, the fording of rivers, to get by moonlight to Hounslow: with every bridle path, and field, and hedge of which district every highwayman was familiar. Then they dashed up to some coach and exchanged shots, or they rammed their pistols through the glass windows, and frightened the ladies into fits, and the men into submission. The watch was drawn from the boot, the jewels from under the cushions; they tossed the spoil into their deep pannier pockets, cursed, threatened, and dashed off. Then eventually they were leaped on in some brandy shop parlour, or were torn down in a savage hue and cry, or were felled by some despairing man, or were betrayed by some jealous mistress. Next came the hard jury and the steel-faced judge, the dim stone room, the staring faces of quidnuncs and heartless men of fashion, the last revel with the turnkey and perhaps the chaplain (for those were odd times), then the unrivetting of the fetters, the presentation of the nosegay, the bellman's mechanical verses, and the grim ride backward up Holborn-hill to Tyburn.

In the reign of William and Mary, Hounslow trembled at the name of Whitney, who, like his successor, Turpin, began life as a butcher. He then kept an inn in Hertfordshire. The best story told of him is that he plundered a gentleman named Long of a hundred pounds in silver. The traveller represented that he had far to go, and did not know where to get money on the road. Whitney at once opened the bag and handed it to him. Long could not resist the opportunity, and drew out a brimming handful. Whitney did not remonstrate, but only said with a smile, as he rode off: "I thought you would have had more conscience, sir." Whitney was at last trapped in a house in Milford-lane, and died in his shoes at a place called Porter's Block, near Smithfield. He was only thirty-four; highwaymen seldom attained old age.

Some heroes get their fame very undeservedly. This is especially the case with Mr. Richard Turpin, who was but a mean and cruel sort of thief, let alone a murderer. He was an Essex butcher, who turned housebreaker, and he and his gang had a cave in Epping Forest, where they and their horses lay in ambuscade. The street ballad writer of 1739 wrote:

On Hounslow Heath, as I rode o'er,
I spied a lawyer riding before.
"Kind, sir," said I, "arn't you afraid
Of Turpin, that mischievous blade?"
O rare Turpin, hero! O rare Turpin, O!

Says Turpin, "He'll ne'er find me out;
I've hid my money in my boot."
"Oh," says the lawyer, "there's none can find
My gold, for it's stitched in my cape behind."
O, rare Turpin, &c.

As they rode down by the Powder Mill,
Turpin commands them to stand still.
Said he, "Your cape I must cut off,
For my mare she wants a saddle cloth."

This caused the lawyer much to fret,
To think he was so fairly bet;
And Turpin robbed him of his store,
Because he knew he'd lie for more.

It is a curious trait of the times that Turpin was allowed to hold half an hour's conversation with the hangman before he took his leap from the ladder.

John Hawkins, one of the wretches that fed the Hounslow crows in 1722, was the greatest robber of mail coaches on record. He stole the bags of five mail coaches in one morning, of two the next day, and of one the next. His gang of thieves were even so audacious as to stop coaches in Chancery-lane and Lincoln's Inn-fields. They used to go and dine at the Three Pigeons at Brentford; then ride on about six in the evening to the Post House at Hounslow, or to Colnbrook, where they would inquire at what hour the mails were due.

It was by no means uncommon for ruined gamblers and bankrupt tradesmen to take a moonlit ride to the heath to retrieve their shattered fortunes, and in 1750, it is on record that William Parson, the wild son of a baronet, and who had been brought up at Eton, and had been in both the navy and army, committed a robbery on the fatal heath, after his return from transportation, and was hung there in chains to scare the night riders.

But travellers had their artifices as well as highwaymen. Men of audacity, when stopped,

had sometimes the effrontery to pretend to be fellow thieves, and were allowed to pass toll free. On one occasion a bold officer in the army, forewarned that the coach would be stopped, hid himself in the *basket*, and on two highwaymen riding up, shot one through the head, and drove off the other. In later times, Townshend, the celebrated Bow-street runner, used often to ride as an armed escort before coaches conveying government money. Townshend was a little fat man, who wore a flaxen wig, kerseymere breeches, a blue straight cut coat, and a broad-brimmed white hat. He was daring, dexterous, and cunning; and his merits, manners, and odd sayings were much relished by the royal family. On one occasion, Townshend having to escort a carriage to Reading, took with him his friend Joe Manton, the celebrated gunmaker, who was fond of adventure, and as brave as a lion. Soon after reaching Hounslow, three foot-pads stopped the coach, and Joe was just going to draw trigger, when Townshend cried out, "Stop, Joe; don't fire! Let me talk to the gentlemen." A glimpse of the moon revealed Townshend's dreaded figure to the thieves, who instantly took to their heels; but he had already recognised them. In a few days his rough and ready hand was on their collars, and they were soon tried and packed off to Botany Bay.

There is a legend at Hounslow that a certain Bishop of Raphoe was shot on the heath, being mistaken for a highwayman. John Rann (alias Sixteen-string Jack) acquired a name, about 1774, at which Hounslow postilions trembled. This fellow had been coachman to Lord Sandwich, who then lived at the south-east corner of Bedford-row, and he acquired his singular name by wearing breeches with eight strings at either knee, to record the number of his acquittals. He was a handsome impudent fellow, much admired by his companions; and he is described as swaggering at Bagnigge-wells in a scarlet coat, deep-flapped tambour waistcoat, white silk stockings, and laced hat. He drank freely there, lost, with extreme nonchalance, a hundred-guinea diamond ring, and openly boasted that he was a highwayman, and could replace the lost jewel by one evening's work. He once showed himself at Barnet races in a blue satin waistcoat trimmed with silver, and was followed by an admiring crowd. He even had the matchless impudence to attend a Tyburn execution, and push his way through a ring of constables, saying that he was just the sort of man who ought to have a good place, as he himself might figure there some day. Just before he was taken for robbing Mr. Devall near the ninth milestone on the Hounslow road, he had stopped Dr. Bell, the chaplain to the Princess Amelia, and taken from him eighteenpence and an old watch. This fellow used to boast that Sir John Fielding's people always used him very genteelly; consequently if they held up a finger he would follow them as quiet as a lamb. When brought before Sir John, Rann wore a bundle of flowers as big as a broom in the breast of his coat, and had his irons tied up tastefully with blue ribbons. At his trial he appeared in a pea-green suit, a ruffled shirt, and a hat bound round with silver strings. He gave a supper a few nights before his execution. An intelligent observer, who saw the cart pass the end of John-street with Rann in it, bound for Tyburn, describes him in his pea-green coat, carrying, as he sat by his coffin, with the chaplain reading prayers to him, an enormous nosegay, presented, according to custom, from the steps of St. Sepulchre's Church. Nothing in life, however, so well became Sixteen-string Jack as the leaving it; for he died penitently, not like desperate Abershaw, who, on mounting the gibbet so long eager for him, kicked his shoes off among the crowd, and leaped savagely into another world.

It is interesting to remember that the first suggestion of Gay's Beggars' Opera was a remark of Swift's, as he sat with his friends, one day in Pope's villa at Twickenham. Hounslow Heath then spread within a quarter of a mile of Twickenham, and Pope must often have seen flying highwaymen chase past the door. Fielding, writing in 1775, does not say much for the moral tone of the Hounslow population at that time. He describes a captain of the Guards, who, being robbed on Hounslow Heath, as soon as the highwayman left, unharnessed a horse, mounted it, and pursued the fellow, at noon day, through Hounslow town, shouting, "Highwayman! Highwayman!" but no one joined in the pursuit.

There was always blood, bad or good, being spilled on Hounslow Heath; in 1802 a terrible crime, for a long time hidden in mystery, threw a darker gloom over the gibbet ground. Mr. Steele, a lavender merchant, in Catherine-street, Strand, who had a house and nursery-garden at Feltham, left town for Feltham on the afternoon of the fifth of November. About seven o'clock on the evening of the sixth, he left Feltham, on his way back to town, wearing a round hat, almost new, half boots, and a great coat. He was never seen again alive. About a quarter past eight, the driver of the Gosport coach, about ten minutes after having changed horses at Hounslow, and when between some trees near the powder mills and the eleventh milestone, heard a man moaning, and several groans. On the tenth the body of the murdered man was found in a ditch some little distance off the road, towards the barracks. The back part of the skull was beaten in, and there was a strap round the neck. A bludgeon lay near the body, and a pair of shoes, and an old soldier's hat, with worsted binding. No clue was obtained to the crime until the end of 1806, when a deserter named Hatfield, just sentenced to the hulks for theft, confessed it. Holloway and Haggarty, labourers, had arranged the murder while they were drinking together at a public-house in Dyot-street. Haggarty, then a marine in the Shannon frigate, was apprehended at Deal. When asked where he had been, that time four years, he turned pale and almost fainted. Hatfield proved that Holloway killed Mr. Steele because he struggled much, just as a coach was ap-

proaching. Holloway carried off Mr. Steele's hat and wore it about London, till, at the instigation of Hatfield, he one day filled it with stones and threw it over Westminster Bridge. The booty was only twenty-seven shillings.

The two wretches were hung at Newgate on February 23, 1807. Holloway kept swearing he was innocent, and shouting, "No verdict, no verdict, gentlemen. Innocent, innocent." The long delay in the arrest of the men, and some lingering belief in their innocence, had attracted forty thousand people to the narrow street of the Old Bailey. When the malefactors appeared on the scaffold, the mob seethed like a black and angry sea. A struggle for life began, and several women and boys were instantly crushed to death. A savage fight for life ensued. At the end of Green Arbour-court, nearly opposite the debtors' door, a pieman unfortunately dropped his basket, and many persons falling over this, were instantly trampled to death. A cart overloaded with spectators breaking down just then added to the horror and despair of the scene. The episodes were agonising. A father saw his son, a fine boy of twelve, trodden to death, but escaped himself with some cruel bruises. A woman with a child at the breast, in dying threw her child to a bystander, who tossed it to another who threw it to another, until it reached some people in a cart, who saved it. Upwards of a cart-load of shoes, hats, and petticoats were picked up. Twenty-seven bodies were taken to St. Bartholomew's Hospital alone.

Two more legends of the heath must not be forgotten. In James the First's time (December 5, 1606), two young hot-blooded lawyers fought a duel alone in a wild part of the heath. They were found, side by side, each having spitted the other with his rapier. In this extremity they had become reconciled, though too weak from loss of blood to help each other. Three years before this, Sir John Townsend (who had been knighted at the siege of Cadiz by the chivalrous Earl of Essex) fought a duel here on horseback with Sir Matthew Brown, Baron of Beechworth, with sword and pistol. Both combatants were dangerously wounded in this desperate and fierce rencontre, Sir Matthew dying on the spot, and Sir John Townsend soon after. So the crow flies, and so the world went once.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER III.

The Briton—I know him by his talking loud about my "breakfast." How often do I hear the florid, white-whiskered Briton, suffering from the heat acutely, tell his friend and tell me—for he does not care who hears him, and prefers an audience—that "he'd speak to Gungl, at the Hesse, about giving some more of that wild deer," or "that he was going to get his cutlets, and very odd the Times was so late;" or else what seems the standard grumble, about "kreutzers and their infernal money. Look, I say, what can you make of such things as these?" And he does seem to think that wherever the Englishman goes, his money, meats, steaks, joints, beds, clubs, Times, &c., should go with him, and be the money, meat, steaks of the country. (My dearest Dora, will you know me after this, or do you suppose it is your poor invalid that is writing? Such a change in me already—to be affecting to be funny!) But I go on. Then I see the great doctor of the place, Seidler, whose book, Homburg and its Springs, is in every bookseller's. He is walking about here, talking to the English, who hang on his words, and his carriage and horses wait at the end of the walk—a good advertisement, for every stranger asks whose it is. The Briton with the white whiskers, I remark, is great on Seidler. At dinner he tells every one what "Seidler said to me this morning. Seidler made me cut off a tumbler of the kayserbrowning, and told me if I had taken it another day he would not have answered for it. Egad! I was working away, and if he hadn't stopped me," &c. Seidler, I can see, is looked on as a magician who can do as he likes with the springs, and mysteriously check their whole efficiency if you offend him. Any one who takes them without consulting *him* goes to destruction at once; or else they do the patient no good at all. We might as well be quaffing common spring water. A third of a tumbler, he will say, every half-hour in the morning, or a tumbler at seven, and half a tumbler at *a quarter to ten*. The idea seems to be, that, delayed till *ten*, the prescription would have no efficacy; and I see the fresh white-whiskered man, watch in hand, counting the moments. I go myself to Seidler, and believe him to be clever; and he certainly hit off my case at once. But these little tricks the English themselves force on him, as their maladies are so tricky and fanciful. He says, three weeks of the water, and, of course, of Seidler—three tumblers of the former, and one interview with the latter per diem—"will make a new man of me." And I believe him. My dear, shall I confess it, I can bear this separation, and am *not* craving to be back. It will be better in the end I should be here. But after ten days I know I shall get restless and eager to see your pretty face. Now, dear, I stop this log, for I

have to go to the baths. To-morrow I go into Frankfort on the business, having heard from the merchant, who has fixed an hour to see me. He talks of some difficulty, but I shall work hard, and do everything to show our gratitude to our dear benefactor. And if I can conclude the matter on more favourable terms, and save him some money, I shall lessen my obligation a little. I find a gentleman whom I met in the walks, and who seems to have a sort of interest in me, is going back to London to-night. I shall send him what I have written so far, and he will post it in London to Dora.

Saturday.—The first portion of the log has gone off. She will have it by Monday, and I know it will amuse them. She will read it out.

At twelve to-day, I pass by the grand red granite building, of a rich handsome stone, and which *is* Homburg. It is in the centre of the town in the street, but has a garden in front; with a row of orange trees, considered the noblest in the world. There is really something grand in the air of these magnificent strangers, each in his vast green box, and standing, I suppose, thirty feet high. The greatest and most tender care is taken of them: men are watering, washing, cleaning, coiffèing these aristocrats, morning, noon, and night. They are allowed to appear abroad during the hot months only, and when the cooler period sets in, they are tenderly moved to a vast palace far off in the woods, built expressly for them, where they live together all the winter, with fires, and blanketing, and matting, and everything luxurious. The story runs that they were lost, one by one, by a certain landgrave, or elector, or grand duke, who staked them against a hundred pounds a piece; and now that brings me to what I have been indirectly fencing off, and which fills me with a certain dread, as I think of it. I never felt such a sensation, as when, after passing through the noble passage floored with marble, three or four hundred feet long, where a whole town might promenade, I found myself in a vast cool shaded hall that seemed like the banqueting-room of a palace. It was of noble proportions, a carved ceiling, and literally one mass of gorgeous fresco painting and gold. Noble chandeliers of the most elegant design hang down the middle, the arches in the ceiling are animated with figures of nymphs and cupids, with gardens and terraces, and the portico furnishing is rich and solid, and in the most exquisite taste. From these open other rooms, seen through arches and beyond the folds of lace curtains, and each decorated in a different taste—one, snowy white and gold, another, pale pink and gold. The floors are parquet in the prettiest patterns. Servants in rich green and gold liveries glide about, and the most luxurious soft couches in crimson velvets line the walls. What art has done is indeed perfect and most innocent; but where nature and humanity gathers round, standing in two long groups down the room, it almost appals. For I hear the music, the faint, prolonged "a-a-a-rr." Then the clatter and sudden rattle and chinking of silver on silver, of gold on gold, and the low short sentences of those who preside over the rite, and—silence again. As I join the group and look over shoulders, then I see that strange human amphitheatre, that oval of eager and yet impassive faces, all looking down on the bright green field—the cloth of gold, indeed. What a sight! the four magicians, with their sceptres raised. The piles of gold, the rouleaux, the rich coils of dollars like glittering silver snakes, and more dangerous than a snake—the fluttering notes nestling in little velvet-lined recesses, and peeping out through the gilt bars of their little cages. There is something awful in this spectacle, and yet there is a silent fascination—something, I suppose, that must be akin to the spectacle at an execution.

The preparation, the prompt covering of the green ground in those fatal divisions, the notes here, the little glittering pile of yellow pieces, the solid handsome dollars, whose clinking seems music, the lighter florins, the double Fredericks, and the fat sausage-like rouleaux, which these wonderful and dexterous rakes adjust so delicately! Now the cards are being dealt slowly, while the most perfect stillness reigns, and every eye is bent on those hands. I hear him at the end of the first row give a sort of grunt, "ung!" then begin his second, and end with a judgment or verdict. There is a general rustle and turning away of faces, stooping forward, a marking of paper, and the four fatal rakes begin sweeping in greedily gold and notes and silver—all in confusion, a perfect rabble—while, this fatal work over, two skilful hands begin to spout money, as it were, to the ends of the earth. On the fortunate heaps left undisturbed come pouring down whole Danae showers of silver and gold; and to the rouleaux come rolling over softly companion rouleaux. Now do eager fingers stretch out and clutch their prize.

Other faces, yellow and contorted, their fingers to their lips, look on dismally. Then it begins again; figures are stooping forward to lay on; and so the wretched formula goes on, repeated—for I made the calculation—some seven hundred times that day. But it never seems to flag, and every time has the air of fresh, and fresher, novelty. It begins to sicken me, and that air of stern concentrated attention, of sacrifice even, depresses me; and when I think that if a return could be got of the agitation, palpitations, hopes, fears, despair, exultation, going on during these seven hundred operations, it would represent a total of human agony inconceivable. Then I see how it can be again multiplied through the twelve months of this wicked year. Then I think of the prospective miseries to others at a distance, to wives and to children—lives wretched, lives unsettled—miserable deaths. I say, I think of all this, and ask, is it too much to call these men special ministers of Mephistopheles—a band under the decent respectable name of a Bank, organised to destroy souls by a machinery, the like of which for completeness exists not on this earth? I say, there is nothing on earth approaching this company, whose men and emissaries ought to wear cock's feathers and red and black dresses, for their complete and successful exertions for destruction and corruption. They distil their poison over that green board, and it is carried away to all countries—to England, France, America, Belgium, Germany, whence the victims return again and again, bringing fresh ones, like true decoys. They hang men; they punish and imprison for far less crimes; but on the heads of these wretches is the ruin of thousands of bodies and souls, the spiritual death, and the actual *corporeal death* of thousands more, who have hung themselves to the fair trees planted in sweet bowers by the "administration," or stifled themselves with charcoal in front of this fatal palace, and who have actually dabbled with their brains over the vile green table on which they have lost all. A banking company! all fair, give and take, and such phrases! Satan says the same in *his* dealings.

And here is this functionary in the trim suit—a pink-faced, hard, cat-eyed sinner, who steals about, and watches everybody, and his own agents also more than any one else. A capital officer they tell me, skilful and wary at the accounts. To him the shareholders will one day present a piece of plate, or hard cash, which he would prefer, in acknowledgment of his exertions in their interest. Oh, that some fitting punishment could be devised for those who thus fatten on the blood of the innocent! I should not come here. I should not breathe this tainted air—look on this painted vice, and their wretched shabby baits, to win the approbation of the decent and the moral, like myself. Here are your English newspapers of every kind and degree. Pray read all day long in these charming rooms, and sit on those soft couches, or out here in these charming gardens while our music plays for you. *Do* understand, nothing is expected from you in return. You, charming English ladies, so fair and pretty, you can work with those innocent fingers; and your nice high-spirited brothers, they would like to get up cricket, would they? Here is a nice field; we shall have it mowed and got ready, and to-morrow shall come from Frankfort the finest bats, stumps, balls—everything complete. Do you give the order; get them from London, if you like. We shall pay. There is shooting, too—quite of the best. We shall be proud to find the guns and dogs, and even the powder. It will do us an honour. Get up a little fête; a dance in the Salons des Princes. We shall light it up for you, and find the servants. So do these tricksters try to impose on us, with their sham presents, for which our Toms and Charleses—good-natured elder brothers—must pay, and pay secretly, in many a visit to these tables. They have built us a superb theatre—one of the handsomest of its size in Europe. How kind, how considerate! yet they charge us a napoleon for a stall, if there is any one worth hearing. Presents, indeed! we know the poor relative who comes with a twopenny-halfpenny pot of jam, and expects to get a handsome testimonial in return. Everything about our "administration" is in keeping; and I almost grieve that I should have come to such a place. This resolution, at least, I can make: never to let the light of an honest man's face beam on their evil doings.

I feel I am rather warm on this matter, but it does seem to me that the whole has been too gently dealt with hitherto, and treated too indulgently. Even these conquerors, who, we are told, have given them notice that they are to be *chassés*, have shown too much respect. They talk of equities—a lease. Do we hold to leases with pirates? Do we make treaties with

Bill Sykes? Had I been the king, I would have marched two regiments into their glittering halls, seized their infamous tools, broken the rakes across the soldiers' knees, torn up their cards, smashed into firewood the roulette board and its numbers, impounded their gold and silver and sent it to the hospitals, and, locking the doors and leaving sentries, have marched off M. A. and M. B., the admirable men of business, in a file of soldiers. I should have these fellows tried, and put to hard labour for the rest of their lives. As it is, a culpable weakness has given them three or four years more to pursue their vile work, and gather, say, twenty thousand precious souls into Satan's own bag net.

CHAPTER IV.

ELEVEN O'CLOCK AT NIGHT.—I cannot endure this terrible spectacle any more, and shall not go to that place again. What I have seen to-night is almost awful. I went in to those rooms, now lit up, rich in colours, and glittering like a king's palace. Such a crowd, and such a contrast! First, I had gone on the terrace, and looked down on the charming gardens, where the innocent were at the little tables, each surrounded with its group, sipping coffee; the music playing in the pavilion. Then I turn round and look at the blazing windows, at the great door behind me, which yawns like a cavern. I hear the faint "click-click" and "rattle-rattle," and that vast and quiet group, crowded together. They are serious and earnest; but there are delighted and festive groups, wandering about—happy families, charming young girls, good-natured papas and mammas looking on with delight; and now one of the young girls comes tripping back with "Charles," in *such* delight, showing something shining in her hand. The great soft couches round are lined with festive-looking people. Every one is "circulating," and there is an air of animation and motion over all. Some curiosity makes me linger, and share it also—a wish to describe to my little darling at home such a strange and singular phase of manners and character. I draw near to that other table—the one I had not seen in the morning, and which is consecrated to roulette. It glitters all over with pieces, sown thickly, sown broadcast, dotted here, there, and everywhere, in perfect spasms of distribution. They contend with each other, this yellow, fiery-eyed, and dirty man, and the keen but pretty girl with the powder an inch thick on her face, and her pink silk gathered up about her. They grudge each other room, do these combatants; they glare savagely underneath; the old lady in black silk guides, with a trembling hand, her single piece to some number dimly seen, but whose place she guesses at. As the ball flies round in its tiny circus, every arm, with long stretched wrists, lunges out, eager to be on; piece jostles piece. "Give us standing room," they say, no matter whether they be lost or won. Then comes the sudden leap and metallic click as the ball stumbles into its bed; then the waterfall comes spouting down from the centre—the heavy streams of coin, directed and lighting with pleasant jingling on its fellows. No one seems daunted by defeat. I see one man who has been frantically piling his gold here, there, and everywhere, and, by some strange and *devilish* perversity, is not allowed to win—no, not once—while little, mean, cautious fiddlers, with their shillings and francs, fare admirably. I see him biting his lips as his nervous fingers turn over the half-dozen little gold pieces, in that agonising uncertainty which I note so often, whether to play the bold game now, risk all, or save this little wreck for another season. And all to be decided within a second. When it is gone, a pause, and then that rueful *walking away* off the stage, while others rush into his place. Or another. His all seems gone; when, after an undecided council, his hand seeks his breast-pocket—a note to be *changed*—something that he has no right to meddle with! Then the girls, young, pretty, and not innocent of fear; then the ladies—good sensible wives at home, but transformed by coming to these places—gradually come in, greedy harpies, and ready, if they lose, to turn cat-like on their husbands. All this wreck, this shocking wreck, caused by this factory of wickedness! I have had enough for one day and for one night. I wish I had not seen it, for it makes me wretched; and yet it is worth seeing as a spectacle of infamy. What I have written, too, will interest my pet at home; and, as I know she hoards up every scrap of my writing, perhaps one day others will find it, and read it, and it may act as a warning. There! I am going to bed infinitely better. God be praised for his mercy! and for my pet's sake I will say over her little prayer, which she will be saying about the same time:

"*O Lord! Thou who dost guide the ship over the waters, and bring safe to its journey's end the fiery train, look on me in this*

distant land. Save me from harm of soul and body; give me back health and strength, that I may serve Thee more faithfully, and be able to bring others dependent on me to serve Thee also, and add to Thy glories! Amen."

Sunday.—How sweet and delicious are the mornings here; what soft airs blow gently from these luxuriant trees and mountains! One really grows fonder of the place every moment. The mornings are the most charming; ever so pastoral, and yet it will seem but the pastoral of the theatre or the opera—sham trees and shepherdesses; and I feel all the time that the corrupting Upas garden spreads its fatal vanities over all. These pretty wells, enchanting walks, innocent flowers, music, lights, trees, ferns, what not—they could hardly be, without *this* support. The odious and plundering vice keeps up and pays for all, even for the innocent blessings of nature; and I doubt whether one is not accessory before the act to those results in accepting *any* benefit from so contaminated a source, and lending *one's countenance* in return to their doings. But this is too much refining, and my pet at home will smile at such scruples. I must not set up to be a saint, and I shall do more practical work if, by word or example, I can save some light and careless soul from the temptation. Some way I seem to myself to be grown a little too virtuous since I came here; but in presence of this awful destroyer it is hard not to be serious.

Another of the baits to purchase the good-will of the decent is the reading room, flooded literally with journals of all climes. Squire John Bull is paid special attention to, by half a dozen of his favourite Times, Pall-Mall, Morning Herald even—though what put that journal in the heads of the administration it would be hard to tell—and the veteran Galignani. But a glass door between the Times and squire, who is stingy at heart, and resents postage, and at the same time having to subscribe to his club at home, where he can have all these papers for nothing—British flesh and blood could not stand *that;* so he and his wife—I knew him at once by his gold glass and complacent air as he reads—come every morning at eleven o'clock, and sit and devour their cheap news till one or two. The greediness and selfishness displayed as to getting papers by these people is inconceivable. I do say there is more of the little mean vices engendered in that room than one could possibly conceive in so small a space. The moment he enters there is the questing eye looking round with suspicion and eagerness until he sees the mainsail of his Times fluttering in another Briton's hand, an old enemy—i.e. one who is a slow reader, and who reads every word. He himself is a slow reader, and reads every word; but *that* is nothing to the point. A look of dislike and anger spreads over his face; but there is the other copy, also "in hand"—in the hand of a dowager, with glasses also—"that *beast* of a woman," he tells his wife. The person in whose hands he likes to see his Times is a young "thing," a "chit of a girl," who just skims over a column or two, reads the Court Circular portion, and the account of the latest opera. Indeed, he thinks that she has no business to be reading at all. He prowls about, looking at the owners of other papers, as who should say, "Ugh, you!" Now some one lays down a paper, and he rushes at it, anticipating another cormorant by a second: it is only the *old* journal, not yesterday's. Then, with eyes of discontent, he goes up to the reader in possession of THE Times, and says, bitterly, "I'll trouble you when you have done with that;" to which the answer is a grunt. And then he draws a chair close opposite to him, and if glaring can hurry, or restless moving of the chair, or impatient ejaculation, he could not fail. When he *does* secure it, what a read he has, and how he does take it out of the others! If he could he would have three or four—one to sit on, one lying near him. And yet he is not a bad man, I am sure, at home; but the very atmosphere of this place, perverts everything. Yet the French and Germans in this room take the thing tranquilly. They read their little newspaper quietly and swiftly, with a little faint eagerness to get possession of the Figaro, or some diverting paper; but no one glares at his neighbour. My Dora at home will send me out a paper, so I shall be independent of these rascals and their pitiful bribes.

Two o'clock.—The dogs in the street drawing the little milk carts, harnessed so prettily, and drawing so "willingly." Honest Tray, with his broad jaws well open, and he himself panting from the heat, looks up every now and again to the neat German girl who walks by him. When she wants him to go on, she leads him gently by his great yellow ear, as if it was a bridle. When there are two together they trot on merrily; but the work is too much for the poor paws of a single one. When

they are waiting, I notice she draws them into the shade, and they lie down there, in their harness.

I must tell you, dearest, about the people here, for this is a great place in which to study human nature and character. All the tribes of the earth seem to come here and take a new sort of shape as they stay. It is a paradise for women, and for pretty women, and therefore if my pet were here, —but I must not turn that pretty head. Neither should I like her to be exposed to the bold, free-and-easy study of some of the gentry who walk about here, and survey beauty leisurely. In England, did any venture to "stare," as we would call it, in such a fashion, we should be tempted to fetch him a good stroke across his insolent face. But here, in this scattering of all the licentious free laws of Europe, it is tolerated and *invited* even. Yes, women are actually proud of this questionable sort of attention, and they give a look in return, though only a second's length, as if to challenge fresh attention. And yet it must be owned our own decent, decorous dames and girls, they look a poor race here; they seem to want style, which is with beauty, colour, everything save expression. There is, indeed, a charming-looking girl, who walks about here with a sister, and has an air of enjoyment and delight truly refreshing in the fade indifference which prevails. She has the most mysterious likeness to my Dora at home: I am glad she is here, as she will be a little photograph of one who is so dear to me. The same expression, the same aristocratic look that *she* has. Petite, with an exquisitely-shaped head, the richest and glossiest dark hair, the most refined outline of face; I am struck with her more and more. What contrasts to her the Americans, dressed to extravagance in theatrical "costumes," as they call laces and flounces, and the shortest of dresses, and the highest of heels, some certainly two or three inches high! Their faces are surprisingly round and full and brilliant, their figures good and handsome, which is a surprise; but when they open their full lips out streams the twang, nasal and horny. I shall see more of them, however, at a ball to be given presently. I know some little details of dress, &c., will amuse. What will my pet say to a rich black silk Watteau dress, all looped and curtained up, all over embroidery, with a crimson Spanish petticoat seen below, and the black all lit up here and there with the most delicate little lines and edging of crimson? It is as delicate as a Cardinal's undress. What will I say? I hear my pet answer. It would cost half a year's salary. Then what will she say to a faint amber-coloured summer dress, all looped and hanging in festoons, with a pale blue and white petticoat? This is, indeed, dressing in water colour, and both are American. There is another, a sort of pale sprite of a fairy, so white and delicate are her cheeks, so lustrous her eyes, so artificial the effect. She is all eternal smiles and giggling, and writhing and twistings of the neck, a favourite part of American pantomime. Her dress is becomingly short, and the oft-quoted Sir John Suckling's line is abolished, and ladies feet do not, like little mice, "run in and out;" but rather arrogantly display themselves peacock-like, as ostentatiously as they can. We might find patterns here for the plumage of all the birds of the air, from the flamingo downward; with a good deal of damaged ware, which I would not for the world my pet saw, but this is only more of the work of the Mephistopheles company yonder. To think, again I say, that these pure blessings, these life-giving springs, sent to give strength and innocence, all to be turned into fresh agents for attracting villany and vice. Was there ever such diabolical perversity!

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER V. WOOLGREAVES.

"You will be better when you have made the effort, mother," said Marian Ashurst to the widow, one day, when the beauty of the summer was at its height, and death and grief seemed very hard to bear, in the face of the unsympathising sunshine. "Don't think I underrate the effort, for indeed I don't, but you will be better when you have made it."

"Perhaps so, my dear," said Mrs. Ashurst, with reluctant submissiveness. "You are right; I am sure you always are right: but it is so little use to go to any place where one can't enjoy oneself, and where everybody must see that it is impossible; and you have—you know——" Her lip trembled, her voice broke. Her little hands, still soft and pretty, twined themselves together, with an expression of pain. Then she said no more.

Marian had been standing by the open window, looking out, the side of her head turned to her mother, who was glancing at her timidly. Now she crossed the room, with a quick steady step, and knelt down by Mrs. Ashurst's chair, clasping her hands upon the arm.

"Listen to me, dear," she said, with her clear eyes fixed on her mother's face, and her voice, though softened to a tone of the utmost tenderness, firm and decided. "You must never forget that I know exactly what and how much you feel, and that I share it all" (there was a forlornness in the girl's face which bore ample testimony to the truth of what she said) "when I tell you, in my practical way, what we must do. You remember, once, then, you spoke to me about the Creswells, and I made light of them and their importance and influence. I would not admit it; I did not understand it. I had not fully thought about it then; but I admit it now. I understand it now, and it is my turn to tell you, my dearest mother, that we must be civil to them; we must take, or seem to take, their offers of kindness, of protection, of intimacy, as they are made. We cannot afford to do otherwise, and they are just the sort of people to be offended with us irreparably, if we did not allow them to extend their hospitality to us. It is rather officious, rather ostentatious; it has all the bitterness of making us remember more keenly what they *might* have done for us, but it *is* hospitality, and we need it; it *is* the promise of further services which we shall require urgently. You *must* rouse yourself, mother; this must be your share of helpfulness to me in the burthen of our life. And, after all, what does it matter? What real difference does it make? My father is as much present to you and to me in one place as in another. Nothing can alter, or modify, or soften; nothing can deepen or embitter that truth. Come with me—the effort will repay itself."

Mrs. Ashurst had begun to look more resolved, before her daughter, who had spoken with more than her usual earnestness and decision, had come to an end of her argument. She put her arm round the girl's neck, and gave her a timid squeeze, and then half rose, as though she were ready to go with her, anywhere she chose, that very minute. Then Marian, without asking another word on the subject, busied herself about her mother's dress, arranging the widow's heavy sombre drapery with a deft hand, and talking about the weather, the pleasantness of their projected walk, and the daily dole of Helmingham gossip.

Marian cared little for gossip of any kind herself, but it was a godsend to her sometimes, when she had particular reasons for not talking to her mother of the things that were in her mind, and did not find it easy to invent other things to talk to her about.

The object which Marian had in view just now, and which she had had some difficulty in attaining, was the inducing of her mother, who had passed the time since her bereavement in utter seclusion, to accept the invitation of Mr. Creswell, the owner of Woolgreaves, the local grandee par excellence, the person whose absence Marian had so lamented on the occasion of her father's illness, to pass "a long day" with him and his nieces. It was not the first time such an invitation had reached Mrs. Ashurst. Their rich neighbour, the dead schoolmaster's friend, had not been neglectful of the widow and her daughter, but it was the first time Marian had made up her mind that this advance on his part must be met and welcomed. She had as much reluctance to break through the seclusion of their life as her mother, though of a somewhat different stamp; but she had been pondering and calculating, while her mother had been only thinking and suffering, and she had decided that it must be done. She did not doubt that she should suffer more in the acting upon this decision than her mother; but it was made, and must be acted upon. So Marian took her mother to Woolgreaves. Mr. Creswell had offered to send a carriage (he rather liked the use of the indefinite article, which implied the extent of his establishment) to fetch the ladies, but Marian had declined this. The walk would do her mother good, and brace her nerves; she meant to talk to her easily, with seeming carelessness, of the possibilities of the future, on the way. At length Mrs. Ashurst was ready, and her daughter and she set forth, in the direction of the distressingly modern, but really imposing, mansion, which, for the first time, they approached, unsupported by him, in whose presence it had never occurred to them to suffer from any feeling of inferiority of position or means, or to believe that any one could regard them in a slighting manner.

Mr. Creswell, of Woolgreaves, had entertained a sincere regard, built on profound respect, for Mr. Ashurst. He knew the inferiority of his own mind, and his own education, to those of the man who had contentedly and laboriously filled so humble a position—one so unworthy of his talents, as well as he knew the superiority of his own business abilities, the difference which had made him a rich man, and which would, under any circumstances, have kept Mr. Ashurst poor. He was a man possessed of much candour of mind and sound judgment; and though he preferred, quite sincerely, the practical ability which had made him what he was, and heartily enjoyed all the material advantages and pleasures of his life, he was capable of profound admiration for such unattainable things as taste, learning, and the indefinable moral and personal elements which combine to form a scholar and a gentleman. He was a commonplace man in every other respect than this, that he most sincerely despised and detested flattery, and was incapable of being deceived by it. He had not failed to understand that it would have been as impossible to James Ashurst to flatter as to rob him; and for this reason, as well as for the superiority he had so fully recognised, he had felt warm and abiding friendship for him, and lamented his death, as he had not mourned any accident of mortality since the day which had seen his pretty young wife laid in her early grave. Mr. Creswell, a poor man in those days, struggling manfully very far down on the ladder, which he had since climbed with the ease which not unfrequently attends effort, when something has happened to decrease the value of success, had loved his pretty, uneducated, merry little wife very much, and had felt for a while after she died, that he was not sure whether anything was worth working or striving for. But his constitutional activity of mind and body had got the better of that sort of feeling, and he had worked and striven to remarkably good purpose; but he had never asked another woman to share his fortunes. This was not altogether occasioned by lingering regret for his pretty Jenny. He was not of a sentimental turn of mind, and he might even have been brought to acknowledge, reluctantly, that his wife would probably have been much out of place in the fine house, and at the head of the luxurious establishment which his wealth had formed. She was humbly born, like himself, had not been ambitious, except of love and happiness, and had had no better education than enabled her to read and write, not so perfectly as to foster in her a taste for either occupation. If Mr. Creswell had a sorrowful remembrance of her sometimes, it died away with the reflection that she had been happy while she lived, and would not have been so happy

now. His continued bachelor estate was occasioned rather by his close and engrossing attention to the interests of his business, and, perhaps, also to the narrow social circle in which he lived. Pretty, uneducated, simple young country women will retain their power of pleasing men who have acquired education, and made money, and so elevated themselves far above their original station; but the influence of education and wealth upon the tastes of men of this sort is inimical to the chances of the young women of the classes in society among which they habitually find their associates. The women of the "well-to-do" world are unattractive to those men who have not been born in it. Such men either retain the predilections of their youth for women like those whose girlhood they remember, or cherish ambitious aspirations towards the inimitable, not to be borrowed or imported, refinement of the women of social spheres far above them. The former was Mr. Creswell's case, in as far as anything except business can be said to have been active in his affairs. The "ladies" in the Helmingham district were utterly uninteresting to him, and he had made that fact so evident long ago that they had accepted it; of course regarding him as an "oddity," and much to be pitied; and since his nieces had taken up their abode, on the death of their father, Mr. Creswell's only brother, at Woolgreaves, a matrimonial development in Mr. Creswell's career had been regarded as an impossibility. The owner of Woolgreaves was voted by general feminine consent "a dear old thing," and a very good neighbour, and the ladies only hoped he might not have trouble before him with "that pickle, young Tom," and were glad to think no poor woman had been induced to put herself in for such a life as that of Tom's stepmother would have been.

Mr. Creswell's only brother had belonged, not to the "well-to-do" community, but, on the contrary, to that of the "ne'er-do-weels," and he had died without a shilling, heavily in debt, and leaving two helpless girls—sufficiently delicately nurtured to feel their destitution with keenness amounting to despair, and sufficiently "fashionably," *i.e.* ill-educated, to be wholly incapable of helping themselves—to the mercy of the world. The contemplation of this contingency, for which he had plenty of leisure, for he died of a lingering illness, did not appear to have distressed Tom Creswell. He had believed in "luck" all his life, with the touching devotion of a selfish man, who defines "luck" as the making of things comfortable for himself, and is not troubled with visions of, after him, the modern version of the deluge, which takes the squalid form of the pawnbroker's, and the poor-house; and "luck" had lasted his time. It had even survived him, so far as his children were concerned, for his brother, who had quarrelled with him, more from policy and of deliberate interest, regarding him as a hopeless spendthrift, the helping of whom was a useless extravagance, than from anger or disgust, came to the aid of the widow and her children, when he found that things were very much worse than he had supposed they would prove to be.

Mrs. Tom Creswell afforded a living example of her husband's "luck." She was a mild, gentle, very silly, very self-denying, estimable woman, who loved the "ne'er-do-weel" so literally with all her heart, that when he died, she had not enough of that organ left to go on living with. She did not see why she should try, and she did not try, but quietly died in a few months, to the astonishment of rational people, who declared that Tom Creswell was a "good loss," and had never been of the least use either to himself or any other human being. What on earth was the woman about? Was she such an idiot as not to see his faults? Did she not know what a selfish, idle, extravagant, worthless fellow he was, and that he had left her to either pauperism or dependence on any one who would support her, quite complacently? If such a husband as *he* was—what she had seen in him beyond his handsome face, and his pleasant manner, *they* could not tell—was to be honoured in this way, gone quite daft about, in fact; they really could not perceive the advantage to men in being active, industrious, saving, prudent, and domestic. Nothing could be more true, more reasonable, more unanswerable, or more ineffectual. Mrs. Tom Creswell did not dispute it; she patiently endured much bullying by strong-minded, tract-dropping females of the spinster persuasion; she was quite satisfied to be told she had proved herself unworthy of a better husband. She did not murmur as it was proved to her, in the fiercest forms of accurate arithmetic, that her Tom had squandered sums which might have provided for her and her children decently, and had not even practised the poor self-denial of paying for an insurance on his

life. She contradicted no one, she rebuked no one, she asked forbearance and pity from no one, she merely wept, and said she was sure her brother-in-law would be kind to the girls, and that she would not like to be a trouble to Mr. Creswell herself, and was sure her Tom would not have liked her to be a trouble to Mr. Creswell. On this point the brother of the "departed saint," as the widow called the amiable idler of whose presence she considered the world unworthy, by no means agreed with her. Mr. Creswell was of opinion that so long as trouble kept clear of Tom, Tom would have been perfectly indifferent as to where it lighted. But he did not say so. He had not much respect for his sister-in-law's intellect, but he pitied her, and he was not only generous to her distress, but also merciful to her weakness. He offered her a home at Woolgreaves, and it was arranged that she should "try" to go there, after a while. But she never tried, and she never went, she "did not see the good of" anything, and in six months after Tom Creswell's death his daughters were settled at Woolgreaves, and it is doubtful whether the state of orphanhood was ever in any case a more tempered, modified misfortune than in theirs.

Thus, the family party at the handsome house, which Mrs. Ashurst and her daughter were about to visit, was composed of Mr. Creswell, his son Tom, a specimen of the schoolboy class, of whom this history has already afforded a glimpse, and the Misses Creswell, the Maud and Gertrude of whom Marian had, in her grief, spoken in terms of sharp and contemptuous disparagement, which, though not entirely censurable, judged from her point of view, were certainly not altogether deserved.

Mr. Creswell earnestly desired to befriend the visitor and her daughter. Gertrude Creswell thought it would be very "nice" to be "great friends" with that clever Miss Ashurst, and had, with all the impulsiveness of generous girlhood, exulted in the idea of being, in her turn, able to extend kindness to people in need of it, even as she and her sister had been. But Maud, who though her actual experience of life had been identical with her sister's, had more natural intuition and caution, checked the enthusiasm with which Gertrude drew this picture:

"We must be very careful, Gerty dear," she said. "I fancy this clever Miss Ashurst is very proud. People say you never find out the nature of any one until trouble brings it to the light. It would never do to let her think one had any notion of doing her services, you know, she might not like it from us; uncle's kindness to them is a different thing; but we must remember that *we* are, in reality, no better off than she is."

Gertrude reddened. She had not spoken with the remotest idea of patronage of Miss Ashurst in her mind, and her sister's warning pained her. Gertrude had a dash of her father's insouciance in her, though in him it had been selfish joviality, and in her it was only happy thoughtlessness. It had occurred to Gertrude, more than once before to-day, to think she should like to be married to some one whom she could love very much indeed, and away from this fine place which did not belong to them, though her uncle was very kind, in a home of her own. Maud had a habit of saying and looking things which made Gertrude entertain such notions, and now she had, with the best intentions, injured her pleasure in the anticipation of the visit of Mrs. Ashurst and Marian.

It was probably this little incident which lent the slight touch of coldness and restraint to the manner of Gertrude Creswell which Marian instantly felt, and which she erroneously interpreted. When they had met formerly, there had been none of this hesitating formality.

"These girls don't want us here," said Marian to herself; "they grudge us their uncle's friendship, lest it should take a form which would deprive them of any of his money."

Perhaps Marian was not aware of the resolve lurking in her heart even then, that such was precisely the form which that friendship should be made to take. The evil warp in her otherwise frank and noble mind told in this. Gertrude Creswell, to whom in particular she imputed mercenary feeling, and the forethought of a calculating jealousy, was entirely incapable of anything of the kind, and was actuated wholly by her dread that Marian should misinterpret any premature advance towards intimacy on her part as an impertinence. Thus the foundation of a misunderstanding between the two was laid.

Marian's thoughts had been busy with the history of the sisters, as she and her mother approached Woolgreaves. She had heard her father describe Tom Creswell and his wife, and dwell upon the fortunate destiny which had transferred Maud and Gertrude to their uncle's care. She thought

of all that now with bitterness. The contrast between her father's character, life, and fate, and the character, life, and fate of Tom Creswell, was a problem difficult to solve, hard to endure. Why had the measure been so differently—she would, she *must* say, so unjustly—meted to these two men? Her fancy dwelt on every point in that terrible difference, lingered around the two death-beds, pictured the happy, sheltered, luxurious, unearned security of those whom the spendthrift had left uncared for, and the harsh, gloomy future before her mother and herself, in which only two things, hard work and scanty means, were certain, which had been the vision her father must have seen of the fate of those he loved, when he, so fitted to adorn an honoured and conspicuous position, had died, worn out in the long vain strife with poverty. Here were the children of the man who had lived utterly for self, and the widow and child of the "righteous," who had done his duty manfully from first to last. Hard and bitter were Marian's reflections on this contrast, and earnestly did she wish that some speedy means of accelerating by efforts of her own the fulfilment of those promises of Providence, in which she felt sometimes tempted to put little faith, might arise.

"I suppose he was not exactly forsaken," said the girl, in her mind, as she approached the grand gates of Woolgreaves, whose ironmongery displayed itself in the utmost profusion, allied with artistic designs more sumptuous than elegant, "and that no one will see us 'begging our bread;' but there is only meagre consolation to me in this, since he had not what might—or all their service is a pretence, all their 'opinions' are lies—have saved him, and I see little to rejoice in, in being just above the begging of bread."

"They have done a great deal to the place since we were here, Marian," said Mrs. Ashurst, looking round admiringly upon the skilful gardening, and rich display of shrubs, and flowers, and outdoor decorations of all kinds. "It must take a great many hands to keep this in order. Not so much as a leaf or a pebble out of its place."

"They say there are four gardeners always employed," said Marian. "I wish we had the money it costs; we needn't wish Midsummer-day further off then. But here is Mr. Creswell, coming to meet us."

Marian Ashurst was much more attractive in her early womanhood than she had promised to be as a very young girl, and the style of her face and figure was of the kind which is assisted in its effect by a somewhat severe order of costume. She was not beautiful, not even positively handsome, and it is possible she might have looked commonplace in the ordinary dress of young women of limited means, where cheap material and coarse colouring must necessarily be used. In her plain attire of deep mourning, with no ornament save one or two trinkets of jet, which had been her mother's, Marian Ashurst looked far from commonplace, and remarkably ladylike. The strongly defined character in her face, the composure of her manner, the quietness of her movements, were not the charms which are usually associated with youth, but they were charms, and her host was a person to whom they were calculated to prove especially charming. Except in his generally benevolent way of entertaining a kindly regard for his friend's daughter, Mr. Creswell had never noted nor taken any particular notice of Marian Ashurst; but she had not been an hour in his house before she impressed herself upon him as being very different from all the other girls of his acquaintance, and much more interesting than his nieces.

Mr. Creswell felt rather annoyed with his nieces. They were civil, certainly; but they did not seem to understand the art of making the young lady, who was visiting them, happy and "at home." There was none of the freemasonry of "the young person" about them. After a while, Mr. Creswell found that the order of things he had been prepared for—what he certainly would have taken to be the natural order of things—was altered, set aside, he did not know how, and that he was walking along the trim garden paths, after luncheon, with Miss Ashurst, while Maud and Gertrude took charge of the visitor to whom he had meant to devote himself, and were making themselves as amiable and pleasant to her as they had failed to make themselves to Marian. Perhaps the fault or the reason was as much on Miss Ashurst's side as on theirs. Before he had conducted his visitor over all the "show" portions of the grounds and gardens, Mr. Creswell had arrived at the conclusion that Marian was a remarkable young woman, with strong powers of observation, and a decided aptitude for solid and sensible conversation, which probably explained the coldness towards her of Maud and Gertrude, who were not remarkable, except for fine complexions, and hair to correspond, and whose talk was of the most

vapid description, so far as he had had the opportunity of observing.

There was not much of importance in appearance to relate about the occurrences of a day which was destined to be remembered as very important by all who passed its hours at Woolgreaves. It had the usual features of a "long day;" spasmodic attacks of animation and lapses of weariness, a great deal of good eating and drinking, much looking at pictures and parade books, some real gratification, and not a little imperfectly disguised fatigue. It differed in one respect, however, from the usual history of a "long day." There was one person who was not glad when it came to an end. That person was Mr. Creswell.

Poor Mrs. Ashurst had found her visit to Woolgreaves much more endurable than she expected. She had indeed found it almost pleasurable. She had been amused —the time had passed, the young ladies had been kind to her. She praised them to Marian.

"They are nice creatures," she said; "really tender-hearted and sincere. Of course they are not clever like you, my dear; but then all girls cannot be expected to be *that*."

"They are very fortunate," said Marian, moodily. "Just think of the safe and happy life they lead. Living like that *is* living. *We* only exist. They have no want for the present; no anxiety for the future. Everything they see and touch, all the food they eat, everything they wear, means money."

"Yes," said Mrs. Ashurst; "and after all, money is a great thing. Not, indeed," she added, with tears in her eyes, "that I could care much for it now, for it could not, if we had it, restore what we have lost."

"No," said Marian, frowning, "but it could have saved us from losing it; it could have preserved love and care, home, position, and happiness to us. True, mother, money is a great thing."

But Marian's mother was not listening to her. Her mind had returned to its familiar train of thought again.

Something had been said that day about Mrs. Ashurst's paying Woolgreaves a longer visit, going for a week or two, of course, accompanied by Marian. Mrs. Ashurst had not decidedly accepted or negatived the proposition. She felt rather nervous about it herself, and uncertain as to Marian's sentiments, and her daughter had not aided her by word or look. Nor did Marian recur to the subject when they found themselves at home again in the evening. But she remembered it, and discussed it with herself in the night. Would it be well that her mother should be habituated to the comforts, the luxuries of such a house, so unattainable to her at home, so desirable in her state of broken health and spirits? This was the great difficulty which beset Marian; and she felt she could not decide it then.

Her long waking reverie of that night did not concern itself with the people she had been with. It was fully occupied with the place. Her mind mounted from floor to floor of the handsome house, which represented so much money, reviewing and appraising the furniture, speculating on the separate and collective value of the plate, the mirrors, the hangings, the decorations. Thousands and thousands of pounds, she thought, hundreds and hundreds of times more money than she had ever seen, and nothing to do for it all. Those girls who lived among it, what had they done that they should have all of it? Why had she, whose mother needed it so much, who could so well appreciate it, none of it? Marian's last thought before she fell asleep that night was, not only that money was a great thing, but that almost anything would be worth doing to get money.

DOMESTIC TURKS.

My friend, Nourri Effendi, had passed a considerable portion of his life in the department of Foreign Affairs, and had spent some time in the European embassies. His chief western acquirements were French and a little German, but he was a distinguished oriental scholar. As a master of the epistolary style in Turkish—or rather in Turkish strongly dashed with Persian after the ancient fashion—few could get near him, for he mounted to the seventy-seventh heaven of inspiration. The Effendi, being by no means a man of the world, continually got into contentions with his colleagues. Thus he was often thrown out of employment, and it was difficult for his numerous old friends and admirers to find him anything suitable to his genius; for he did not shine so much in the quantity of his work, as in his own estimate of the quality. The quantity was small.

I remember his favouring me by writing a translation of five lines which were to be addressed in triplicate to the Grand Vizier, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Commerce. The Effendi, as was his wont, came later than his appointment, with a time-honoured excuse, that as Zuleikha Hanum wanted him to buy something, her errand had engaged him.

He set himself sedulously and seriously to

work. I asked him now and then how he was getting on, but he had been three hours at it before he called my attention to the accomplishment of one portion of his task. He then read me the draft of three lines of his high-flown Turkish, and solicited me to admire the beautiful antithesis, and to acknowledge how well the two parts of the phrase were balanced. "It is almost poetry," said he.

"Mashalla, Effendi," said I, "it is an admirable composition; but it states the very opposite of my meaning; and, like poetry, it is not true."

"It would be a pity, Bey," replied he, "to sacrifice such a gem. Observe!" He went on, &c. &c.

He was confident it would excite the attention and admiration of the Grand Vizier. With great difficulty I did at last get my own meaning substituted, deeply to his regret.

He then copied out in due form the letter for his highness ready for the post, and I affixed my signet.

"Now," said I, "Effendi, quick with the two copies for the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Commerce."

"I will at once," responded he, "set about composing a suitable epistle for his Highness the Minister of Foreign Affairs."

"Wherefore, Effendi, when there is nothing more to be done than to copy that to the Grand Vizier, as it is the communication of the facts?"

"True," answered he; "but therefore it will never do. This letter is composed for the dignity of the Grand Vizier. As Aali Pasha is one of the most distinguished scholars in Turkey, I cannot think of writing to him what is only suited for the Grand Vizier. While respecting the exalted rank of Aali Pasha, we must lower it in style, to adapt it to one who is no longer grand vizier."

"And the Minister of Commerce," said I; "what as to his copy?"

"Inshallah!" said the Effendi, soberly, "we will provide for him, too. We must compose him another letter, with other words, in proportion to his quality; for he is much lower in rank than Aali Pasha or a grand vizier. Fear not!"

The Effendi applied himself to the blithesome occupation of compiling such an epistle as should gratify the critical eye of the universally admired master of learning, and the mail steamer had worked some two hours down the harbour with his letter for the Grand Vizier and my poor and hasty substitutes for the jewelled literary treasures of Nourri Effendi, before he had finished Number Two.

"Mashallah, Bey," said he, "the steamer has gone. What a pity! For this is indeed a satisfactory letter."

He went off, having another commission to execute for his wife on his way home; and I never asked him for Number Three.

He was indeed an accomplished master of his graphic art, and would sit, green spectacles on nose, and smoke, and write, and blot out, and get another whiff from his chibook, and another word from the coinage of his brain, and so his task proceeded. A distinguished provincial authority, who had been a chamberlain of the Sultan, courtly, courteous, and accomplished, had received me with some hospitality; and on his being promoted to a higher post I was desirous of congratulating him. Nourri Effendi gladly came to my aid. Three days did he devote to the composition of a short letter. Though he expounded to me its meanings and its beauties, for there were many for each word, it would, in my inferior state of appreciation, have taken me at least three days more, to arrive at anything near its exact interpretation. I fear that I affixed my mehur or signet to a document which I very imperfectly understood.

After many days the slow post brought me a reply from His Excellency. Having glanced at it, I transferred it to Nourri Effendi for his perusal. He was in ecstasies, and he read, re-read, and remarked upon each passage, making (I dare say) a most valuable commentary on the recondite mysteries of the oriental language. The Governor was well known to be as great a master of the sublime as Nourri Effendi, and had responded valiantly.

At the Effendi's request I delivered the precious work of art to him, and at the end of a month he was still exhibiting to admiring and bored friends his draft, with the Governor's admirable response.

Nourri Effendi's domestic claims so much interfered with his public engagements, that his occasional apologies on this head brought on many little conversations about family matters. His wife, although of provincial extraction, had profited by a long residence in Stambool, to acquire the tasteful habits of a metropolitan. There was no need to inquire how many wives the Effendi had, for there could be but one autocrat to whose sway he was bound. In vain had the legislator of Islam conferred on him, as a true believer, the prerogative of summary divorce by his own whim or behest, and of making this irrevocable by the formula of triple divorce. The Effendi must have been long ago convinced that such divorces were not invented for deliverance from such a wife as his, and that divorce would only have been followed by re-marriage to her, under conditions of severer thraldom. I imagine he had, as the limit of his liberty, a right of grumbling outside his own house, and beyond reach of the lady's ears. The narrow income of the Effendi was spent under my lady's dictation, and extraordinary budgets were demanded, although they were obliged to live a life of much enforced economy, greatly to her discontent. His provision of tobacco and snuff could only have been obtained by making a forced levy on the receipt of his monthly salary; after which epoch his purse departed from him.

From this authority I got an insight into the subject of mothers-in-law in Turkey, and I grieve to say he was not so devotedly attached to his mother-in-law as perhaps he ought to have been. Unluckily he had moved near to

his wife's birthplace, and this not only brought him a visit from mamma when he could ill afford it, but his wife exercised her privilege under the marriage laws of Turkey, by making a return journey. Mothers-in-law need not legally be brought into the house, in Turkey, but whether they can practically be kept out by an ordinary husband it is hard to say. Nourri Effendi's relative had kindly gone as far as Stambool to visit him and his wife. As for the visits of wives to their mothers, that is a totally different matter. A refusal to allow such expression of affection might be attended by a summons to the nearest police magistrate, and a warrant to levy on the goods of the culprit such sum for travelling charges, outfit, dresses, presents, &c., as the lady might demand, and competent assessors—possibly female—declare to be consistent with the wife's pretensions in society.

From Nourri Effendi I learned the opinions of Turkish wives on the important subject of followers. "Madame," said he, "has kept me at home again, asking me to buy her a pair of black slaves, which she says we absolutely require for our respectability; but that I do not see." I had long known that in Turkey everything must be perfect, and therefore in pairs. As a boy I had seen the braces of pistols and the pairs of knives and watches, and this prepared me for seeing the male and female population paired off, to avoid the imperfection of the odd state and the consequent perils of the evil eye. A pair of slaves was a new idea. The pair of slaves did not mean two boys or two girls, but a pair, a boy and a girl.

"I have told her several times we do not want them, and cannot afford them; but she persists, as women will, and says 'they will be a great economy besides.' I do not like blacks in the house, because they are only fresh-caught barbarians, and, besides, we cannot want two. 'Why not,' said I, 'get some decent orphan girl from the country, whom we can take care of;' but madame answers she does not want girls, as in a short time they are sure to have brothers and cousins, who will see them; but a black from Africa has no cousins."

From the lady with servants, the transition to the lady without them is not great.

Osman Aga, the son of a good family in a large provincial city, was, when I knew him, a retired captain of cavalry on half-pay or pension, married to a lady whose patrimony was some small bit of property near the former city of Assos. Osman had profited little at school; he could not write, and he did not like reading—that art, indeed, he now left to his wife. In those good old times he could be a captain without them. As every one, instead of signing his name, affixes his signet, Osman was sufficiently qualified when he contented himself with the figures which would fill up a return of his troop, or make out the quantities in an account for barley or chopped straw—in case no learned private was at hand to officiate as clerk.

Besides his long period of service in every part of the empire, Osman Aga had been in the brilliant Bulgarian campaign against the Russians, and wore the medal. He was never tired of extolling the gallantry and conduct of the handful of English heroes who had served with the Ottoman army; though a thorough patriot, he often wished that the Turkish soldiery were led by such officers.

The captain had served so long as to earn his pension; a sum of twelve pounds a year, paid monthly—when not in arrear. On this sum, there are still parts of Turkey in which he could have kept his wife and daughter; but he could not do that in a western city, to which progress had brought European prices. He inherited a small house in a respectable quarter, but had no other patrimony. His sole remaining resources were the scanty olive and grape crops on the fields of Adileh Hanum, which furnished little coin for remittance.

Osman was anxious to eke out his narrow income by some small employment, and had lately lost a petty berth on the extraordinary staff at the customs, to which he was waiting to be restored. A Turkish friend of rank spoke very strongly to me of Osman Aga as a man of character and integrity, and begged me to use my influence to get him temporary occupation. Osman Aga became, therefore, an occasional caller at my house. He was a thin man, of middle height and of soldierly bearing, about fifty-five. His uniform frock-coat was carefully kept and brushed. Its smartness was of the past, and the medals were its only ornament. He was always neat, though in Turkey a button or two off, or any such divergence from symmetry, is no more thought of than in Munster.

In his walks to my house, he by-and-by brought a shy little baby girl, with large black eyes. Sometimes she was in full dress, going out on a holiday; her finger-nails and palms duly stained with henna, a pretty embroidered handkerchief on her head, with a jewel, a gold coin, or a flower adorning it; sometimes she was in her ordinary muslin walking dress; never gaudy. An elder boy had died of fever, and she was the only child. Little Fatmeh was soon familiar in my family. Her gentle well-behaved ways won regard for her, though she could seldom be prevailed on to accept anything. When she did so, the fruit, or whatever it might be, was always first shown to her father, and then taken home to her mother.

At last, I got a temporary berth for Osman Aga as kerserdar, or police inspector, at an unhealthy place in the country: to the great delight of himself and his family, and also of mine. The small income would at once place them at ease. Adileh Hanum called on my wife, with Fatmeh, to express her gratitude. She was a quiet ladylike woman of five-and-thirty; well and neatly, but not richly, dressed, with the Constantinople yashmak, and not the provincial veil.

This lady told my family of the strain the captain's loss of office had brought on their small income, and the benefit my intervention had conferred on them. They were thankful to

God, and her husband would ever be found faithful to me.

While the captain was officiating in the country, and looking after evildoers, I sometimes saw him. He told me that his quarters were bad, but that he had at length found a small house in the village, and was going to have his family down. I thought they would hardly like the change from a city life to the dulness of a village. "The familia," said he, "had been used to it in her father's house, and was fond of goats, and turkeys, and geese, and fowls, and a garden. It would be quite a treat for Fatmeh, who could play about all day long." Familia, or family, is now a common polite word in Turkish for wife.

The captain's occupation ran out; he became a suitor to me again; the treasury, to remit to the foreign creditor, and keep faith with him, held back payments from Osman and other pensioners and home servants; and he was as ill off as ever. Every now and then I got him some little employment, and received his thanks. There was never a Bairam, or Christmas, or Easter, for some years when the complimentary calls in our house did not include Captain Osman Aga, with his wife and daughter. I had become his effective patron and friend, and his devotion went beyond European bounds, though the position of a captain in the army in Turkey is not even yet what it is in Europe. The captain, yuzbashi, or head of a hundred in the regular army, was, till the change was made in my time, no more than a warrant officer; commissions beginning with second majors, and only the sons of country gentlemen or squireens serving as captains and lieutenants. The present Sultan, to elevate the army, has given official precedence to the captains; but they hardly realise their new honours at the tail of the aristocracy. Europeans seldom understand the real status of the captain, and draw very disparaging reflections from incidents which come before them. The captain is often no more than an illiterate common man raised from the ranks—I must add, though, generally a conscientious soldier and thorough master of his drill and business.

A curious story is told of a French ambassador, as an illustration of the want of dignity in what he considered to be Turkish officers. The old general, being present at the grand audience, in the Seraglio at the Bairam, received some attentions from a captain commanding near him. On leaving, his excellency desired his dragoman to tender his thanks to the captain, and invite him, as a brother-officer, to dinner. The captain expressed his gratitude, but continued to hang about, as if wanting something more. "I can settle it," said the dragoman; and he evidently did so, as the captain retired with much expression of contentment. "How did you manage it?" "I gave him a five-franc piece, with which he was much better satisfied than with the honour of dining with your excellency." The ambassador naturally wondered at the low standard of Turkish officers, and it was no business of the Levantine dragoman to undeceive him, and inform him that the captain was not an officer, but a sergeant-major.

As to Osman Aga, both before and after his elevation to the table of precedency as a functionary of state of the fourth class, his devotion to me was the same. It never occurred to him, or to me, that it was a degradation, and it was what he would willingly have shown to his general, or to any dear friend. If we were on a journey, no one but himself was allowed to saddle my horse, if he could help it. He would snatch my boots out of the hands of my men, and polish them himself. There was no act of personal help he would not tender, and this without any sycophantism or loss of respect on either side. The colonel will fill the chibook of his old general—he is as his child. The major will do as much for the colonel, the captain for the major under whom he has served, and so on. Two friends of equal rank will vie which shall seem to kiss the hem of the other's robe; and ladies act in the same way. However undignified this may seem to Europeans, not being Spaniards, it conveys to the Osmanli an idea of dignity; not of humiliation. Under the old constitution (and the impress of it is not yet lost), all was so far democratic that any porter in the street might aspire to the highest honours, and believe himself destined to become grand vizier. Those who attain honours are therefore looked upon as delegates and representatives of the mass, to whom freemen cheerfully do homage.

In the course of years, Fatmeh grew bigger, and not so shy, and I found she had been sent to school; on which the captain expressed his sentiments with as much unction as if he had never played the dunce. "The Family," said he, "considers schooling religious and necessary. The Family can read, and Fatmeh, Inshallah, will get on with her learning, as is her duty!"

"Inshallah, please God!" responded I.

By-and-by Fatmeh made progress in her reading, and the reverend schoolmaster, the captain told me, was much satisfied with her. She gave me a specimen of her skill out of one of my books, reading some hard words with all the precision and ceremony of a Hojah; nor did she neglect her needle. Besides work of her mother's, she brought me a handkerchief she had embroidered, and my family looked on her as a bright girl.

Occasionally on festivals we got presents from Adileh Hanum of choice confectionery or pastry, and we found the small household conducted with as much comfort and care as Turkish arrangements will allow.

The poor captain was much pinched after I left; but I am informed that Fatmeh is married to a rising merchant, and that there were great festivities, to which we should all have been invited, had we been on the spot. Adileh Hanum spends some of her time in arranging her daughter's household, and the captain passes his spare time in the warehouse of his son-in-law, where, though his expertness is

limited, he is ornamental as a companion to old customers and a guarantee of respectability to new acquaintances.

PARAFFINE.

WHENCE the paraffine about which we read so much in the newspapers? How was it discovered, where is it obtained, what are its properties, by what means is it manufactured? Daily we read of its marvellous capabilities, its destructive powers, and the numerous and strange uses to which it can be applied. Occasionally we are startled with reports of terrible disasters which it has occasioned: railway trains burnt to ashes, as at Abergele recently; houses blown into ruins and the inhabitants maimed and killed; heads of quiet households startled into hysterics by the unexpected explosion of the evening lamps; ships lost at sea by incautious stowage of the barrels containing the liquid. Painfully familiar is the reading public with the name of paraffine; but to most persons it is a name and nothing more.

And yet its history has in it something of romance. The discovery of the mineral from which it is extracted was an accident. Its manufacture was for a long time a secret. The profits which arose from its production gave rise to a law-suit, as famous and interminable as those of Plainestanes v. Peebles, or Jarndyce v. Jarndyce. Its production suddenly raised a poor, almost unknown, district, into a thriving and populous seat of industry. Added to all this, the processes to which it is subjected are among the most curious and interesting in modern chemistry.

The word paraffine is almost new to the language, its introduction dating back only so far as the year 1847. About that time, Professor Lyon Playfair, who was travelling in Derbyshire, had his attention drawn to a thick, dark, oily fluid trickling from some rents in a coal mine. The peculiarity of the liquid arrested his thoughts; and after due calculation and experiment, he arrived at the conclusion that this substance, which was, through ignorance, allowed to run to waste, contained properties of a very remarkable and valuable character. Being himself occupied with other investigations, he communicated the result of his observations to Mr. James Young, an acquaintance of an analytical turn of mind, and encouraged him to conduct experiments with the view of testing the qualities of the crude and mysterious liquor. Acting upon the hints thus given, and sustained by strong hopes of a successful issue, that gentleman took the matter in hand, bringing to the prosecution of the work great experience, perseverance, and no inconsiderable degree of knowledge as a practical chemist. The result far exceeded his expectations. Subjected to distillation, the coarse fluid yielded a pale yellow-coloured oil, full of floating lustrous particles. Further experiments proved these to be crystals of paraffine—a substance then only known to the learned. This discovery led to the establishment in Derbyshire of a small manufactory, for distilling burning and lubricating oils from the coarse petroleum issuing from the coal-mine. The venture proved exceedingly remunerative; and for two years a pretty extensive trade in the new oils was maintained.

Suddenly the supply of the raw material ceased: the trickling stream of coarse petroleum was dried up; and the manufactory was stopped. The untoward event caused much chagrin to the proprietor, who was beginning to look forward with assurance to the foundation of a highly profitable source of commerce. He found himself at once cut off from employment, and the experiments which had cost him so much toil and anxiety threatening to become valueless. Indomitable will saved him from despair. He felt persuaded that a substitute could be found for the petroleum, and to the discovery of this his energies were directed. Reflection and observation had, some time before, caused him to arrive at the conclusion that the crude petroleum was produced by simple natural causes; and further study of the subject convinced him that those causes were merely the gradual distillation of coal by means of subterranean heat. This was a great step in advance. Prospects of success again dawned upon him, and he looked forward to the early resumption of his manufactory. One desideratum only remained, and that was to be able to produce an artificial petroleum equal to the natural rock-oil, the supply of which he had exhausted. This difficulty also yielded to perseverance; and after two years' investigations in the laboratory, he found that a liquid of an oleaginous kind, similar in its properties to the natural oil, was obtained by subjecting coal to distillation at a low temperature.

These preliminary obstacles vanquished, the next point to be considered was, where to procure the requisite mineral? Petroleum, it was found, could be extracted from any coal of a bituminous nature; but the species known as cannel coal yielded the largest quantities. Even this, however, was not sufficiently rich in oil-producing qualities to induce Mr. Young to revive the manufacture. He feared that the expense would be too great, and that the quantity of petroleum produced would be in very small proportion to the amount of coal consumed. Various coal-fields were surveyed, and numerous investigations were conducted, with the view of deciding whether a mineral could not be procured which would yield a fair supply of oil; but for a long time the result was despaired of. Almost every coal was suitable, but none was sufficiently prolific. Clearly, little prospect of establishing another manufactory! Just as weariness of the heart, arising from hope deferred, was setting in, a discovery was made in Linlithgowshire which gave a new turn to events, and promised to realise the most sanguine wishes of the investigator. This was in the year 1850. Borings, which had been carried on near Bathgate for some time, made known the fact that a peculiar kind of coal

which there abounded was exceedingly rich in oil. Mr. Young becoming apprised of the fact, lost no time in acquiring a lease of the coal-field; and in the year following he opened the Bathgate Paraffine Works, which, in the course of a few years, converted a small weaving village, with a population of three thousand souls, into an industrious hive of upwards of ten thousand.

For the sake of convenience we have described the substance from which the future paraffine was to be made as Linlithgowshire "coal;" but this designation has been denied it by learned and competent authorities. To the unpractised eye, however, it is purely a species of coal, and may be regarded essentially as such. It is a hard, lustreless, rusty, black-coloured mineral, very brittle, and apt to break into thin slabs like slates. Perhaps there are few more notable instances of the truth, that you can get men to swear that black is white, and white black, than in connexion with the "coal" to which we are referring. As has been said, it was the subject of a celebrated law-suit. The proprietor to whom the coal-field belonged, becoming aware in due course that an invaluable article called paraffine was being distilled from it, which was rapidly pouring a fortune into the treasury of the distiller, demanded a very large increase of rental. This was refused, and the dispute went to court. The case dragged its slow length for years. Geologists, naturalists, mineralogists, chemists, colliers; witnesses, learned and unlearned, were ranged on either side and pitted against each other. The proprietor of the estate and his friends declared that the substance out of which paraffine was being manufactured was not "coal," as defined in the lease, but a mineral of a distinct species, and that therefore he had the right to increase the rental (seeing the mineral had turned out so valuable), or to get the lease cancelled. Mr. Young and his witnesses, on the other hand, averred that the substance was coal, and none other than coal; and that if he had discovered valuable properties in it he should reap the benefit. The dispute, as is generally the case, was ultimately found to have benefited no one but the lawyers.

Leaving history, let us pass to the process of manufacture. Here the most wonderful part of the tale has to be related. Few persons who are accustomed to use the pure white candles, delicate as wax in their hue, and known popularly by the name of "composites;" and the clear oil, almost as transparent as water, which is called "paraffine;" have any idea that both are produced from a dull, compact coal, totally devoid of the lustre which gives to that mineral the appellation of the "black diamond." And yet this seeming miracle is achieved by the aid of chemistry—that strange science which changes and transmutes substances, and reveals properties hidden and mysterious at the will or instigation of the student. The process by which the change is effected is complicated and laborious; but, freed from its technicalities, it may be easily explained.

The coal yields four different articles, all of which are largely employed in daily life, and have given rise to a considerable commerce. There is, first, the paraffine oil for burning, at present manufactured by thousands of gallons which, in many parts of England, where gas is still unknown, is the staple commodity of illumination. Then a second quality of the same oil, considerably cruder and coarser, which, on account of its cheapness and general aptitude, is largely employed for lubricating machinery. Naphtha comes next upon the list—a light, volatile fluid; much used by travelling showmen to light up their stalls and tents. Lastly, there is solid paraffine—a pure, white, shining, tasteless substance, scarcely distinguishable from wax, which is manufactured into candles. These substances, though widely differing in colour, properties, and consistency, are all manufactured by nearly the same process, the difference consisting merely in the number of times that a particular operation is repeated.

Boghead mineral is the name of the coal employed in the manufacture of paraffine; and this is conveyed from the pits direct into the heart of the works, by means of branch lines of railway. Arrived here, the coal is passed through a huge iron crushing-machine, and broken into small pieces, to facilitate the labour of subsequent stages. The first result to be achieved is to extract the crude oil from the coal. This is effected by means of retorts, into which the mineral is put, and the oleaginous matter extracted by burning. These retorts may, for our purposes, be described as huge upright iron pipes passing through furnaces. The coal is filled into the pipe or tube by the top, which is then closed with an air-tight valve; and the bottom of the pipe is led into a pool of water to prevent the entrance of air from below. A low red heat of uniform temperature is maintained constantly in the retorts. As the coal is acted upon by the fire, it descends gradually in the tube and becomes entirely decomposed. The essential or oleaginous property of the mineral passes off in vapour, and the refuse falls through the bottom of the pipe into the pool of water, and is raked away. The vapour or steam, as it is generated by the decomposition of the coal, is carried off by a pipe in the side of the retort. This pipe again communicates with a series of pipes placed upright in the open air, and arranged on the same principle as the bars of a common gridiron, after the fashion that prevails in gasworks. The vapour, in travelling through this labyrinth of pipes, cools, is condensed into liquid, and is run off into an immense reservoir sunk into the ground. The crude, oily liquor thus collected is a thick, black, greasy fluid, not unlike tar, which moves with a sluggish motion when stirred, and gives off inflammable vapours at the usual atmospheric temperature. This coarse oil, both in its properties and appearance, closely resembles natural petroleum, and is equal to the rock oil, which, as we have seen, was obtained in Derbyshire.

The raw material thus procured by simple burning is kept stored in the tank, and is only drawn off when required. To the observer

nothing seems stranger than that this heavy, black, tarry liquid should produce oil as pure as water, and solid paraffine as white as marble. And yet the marvel is wrought daily, and on a scale which supplies distant markets of the world with oil. It is a mere question of refining. The black liquor is, as it were, boiled, washed, and bleached, re-boiled, re-washed, and re-bleached, until the last particle of its darkness and impurity is purged away. The first step in the work of refinement is in some respects similar to the previous process of decomposition. The crude tarry liquid is put into stills, which we may call huge boilers of gigantic strength, with movable doors or lids. When the stills have been filled, the doors are closed, and the joints are stuffed with clay, so as to render the interior perfectly air-tight. Fires are then lighted in the furnaces below the boilers, and kept up to a steady heat, till the fluid inside distils over and is transmuted again into vapour. This vapour, as in the former instance, permeates through another series of condensing pipes, and, during its transit, is re-transmuted into liquor, and flows into a second reservoir. Collected in this tank, the oil shows abundant evidence of the severity of the ordeal through which it has been put. It passed into the stills black, and of the consistency of treacle; it has come out of a dark green colour, and of the consistency of pea-soup. A large portion of the coal-black has, in fact, been boiled out of it, which is now to be found in the bottom of the boilers in the shape of a lustrous compact residue resembling coke, for which it makes a very good substitute.

The next stage in the process of purification is of a different character. The dark green liquor is transferred to tanks, and a certain quantity of strong sulphuric acid is added. The acid is employed in order still further to bleach the oil, and purge it of some more of the impurity with which it is so largely impregnated. To effect this object it is essential that the oil and the acid should be mixed up or assimilated as much as possible—a work of some difficulty, on account of the tendency of the former to float on the top, by reason of its lighter specific gravity. This tendency is neutralised by the action of a revolving stirrer fitted with blades, which, when put in motion, beats and agitates the two liquids, and causes them to mingle equally. For four hours is this operation continued, until, under the biting influence of the acid, the dark green oil changes to pale green, and gives token of having parted with much of the grosser substances that had rendered it dull and opaque. The stirrers being at length stopped, the liquor is allowed to settle, and the organic impurities that have been separated from it by the action of the vitriol, collect in the bottoms of the tanks. The lees in this case assume the shape of a coarse acid tar, which is also used as a substitute for fuel.

The oil, thus far cleansed of its foulness, is now transferred to clean tanks, mixed with a strong solution of caustic soda, and again subjected to the beating of the stirrers. The action of the alkali extracts a good deal more of the colouring matter, and changes the pale green to yellow. At the end of a second period of four hours the liquor is allowed to settle, is drawn off from the lees as before, is pumped into the stills and re-distilled, and is again brought back to be put through the acid and alkali bleaching process; the result being its assumption of a clear, pale, yellow colour. When in this stage of its preparation the oil contains the elements of no less than four different products, each valuable as articles of commerce, to separate which is the next care of the manufacturer.

The separation is effected merely by distilling the oil at various temperatures. At the lowest temperature the lightest and most volatile parts of the oil pass off in the shape of vapour. Upon being cooled, by passing through pipes, this vapour yields a liquid which, upon being distilled by itself, gives a light, transparent, inflammable fluid known by the name of naphtha, the specific gravity of which is considerably less than that of the naphtha derived from coal-tar. This naphtha is largely employed as a substitute for turpentine in india-rubber works, where it is employed to dissolve the materials used in that branch of manufacture. At the temperature next to the lowest, those parts of the oil that are next to naphtha in point of volatility are taken off, distilled and condensed, and yield paraffine or lamp oil. The processes of purification and distillation are repeated with this oil till it has assumed the requisite degree of purity, and becomes transparent and almost free from smell. A gallon of this oil weighs about eight and a quarter pounds, and is, in point of illuminating power, nearly equal to one gallon and a quarter of American petroleum. A yet higher temperature than that which is necessary for the production of the burning oil produces a thick, heavy, lubricating oil, used in vast quantities in the Lancashire factories for oiling the machinery, and also by watch and clock and philosophical instrument makers. This oil, when it comes from the still, is largely impregnated with solid paraffine, and when it cools it assumes the consistency of grease, the paraffine having coagulated into crystals. Before the lubricating oil can be made available for what it is intended, these crystals must be separated from it; and here again another operation, but one of a very simple nature, is requisite. The oil is poured into thick canvas bags, which are placed in hydraulic presses. Pressure is then applied with such force that the oil is squeezed out of the bags, leaving the crystals within. The oil thus squeezed out is the lubricating oil, and is ready for the market; the crystals are the paraffine in embryo which has so often been admired in the shape of candles.

When turned out of the bags the paraffine is in its coarsest state, and is of a dirty yellow colour. This hue is the result of the quantity of oily matter which the substance, in spite of its frequent purgings, still retains. Its perfect and final purification is effected by the repetition of a single process, continued till the requisite clearness is obtained. The paraffine is dissolved in heated naphtha, and is kept in solu-

tion for a considerable time, after which it is allowed to cool and again assume its crystalline form. The process of squeezing in the press is repeated, and when shaken out of the bags this time the paraffine is seen to have changed from yellow to dirty white, and is consequently so much purer. The operations of dissolving and straining are repeated till perfect pureness and whiteness are obtained. This result achieved, the odour of naphtha which clings to the substance is driven off by steam, and the paraffine, in a liquid state, is run into moulds, which form it into thick round cakes. In this shape it is sent off to the candle-makers.

AN ACORN.

Within this little shell doth lie
A wonder of the earth and sky;
Grasped in the hollow of my hand,
But more than I can understand.

A germ, a life, a million lives,
If this small life but lives and thrives,
And draws from earth, and air, and sun,
The endings in this husk begun.

A few years hence, a noble tree,
If time and circumstance agree:
'Twill shelter in the noonday shade
The browsing cattle of the glade.

'Twill harbour in its arching boughs
The ringdove and its tender spouse,
The bright-eyed squirrel, acorn fed,
The dormouse in its wintry bed.

Its stalwart arms and giant girth,
Felled by the woodman's stroke to earth,
May build for kings their regal thrones,
Or coffins to enclose their bones.

And looking further down the groove,
Where Time's great wheels for ever move,
We may behold, all sprung from this,
A woodland in the wilderness.

A forest filled with stately trees,
To rustle in the summer breeze,
Or moan with melancholy song,
When wintry winds blow loud and strong.

And;—would the hope might be fulfilled!
A forest large enough to build,
When war's last shattered flag is furled,
The peaceful navies of the world.

Such possibilities there lie,
In this young nursling of the sky!
We know; but cannot understand;
Acorns ourselves in God's right hand!

NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES.

By Charles Dickens.

A SMALL STAR IN THE EAST.

I had been looking, yester-night, through the famous Dance of Death, and to-day the grim old wood-cuts arose in my mind with the new significance of a ghastly monotony not to be found in the original. The weird skeleton rattled along the streets before me, and struck fiercely, but it was never at the pains of assuming a disguise. It played on no dulcimer here, was crowned with no flowers, waved no plume, minced in no flowing robe or train, lifted no wine-cup, sat at no feast, cast no dice, counted no gold. It was simply a bare, gaunt, famished skeleton, slaying its way along.

The borders of Ratcliffe and Stepney, Eastward of London, and giving on the impure river, were the scene of this uncompromising Dance of Death, upon a drizzling November day. A squalid maze of streets, courts, and alleys of miserable houses let out in single rooms. A wilderness of dirt, rags, and hunger. A mud-desert chiefly inhabited by a tribe from whom employment has departed, or to whom it comes but fitfully and rarely. They are not skilled mechanics in any wise. They are but labourers. Dock labourers, water-side labourers, coal porters, ballast heavers, such like hewers of wood and drawers of water. But they have come into existence, and they propagate their wretched race.

One grisly joke alone, methought, the skeleton seemed to play off here. It had stuck Election Bills on the walls, which the wind and rain had deteriorated into suitable rags. It had even summed up the state of the poll, in chalk, on the shutters of one ruined house. It adjured the free and independent starvers to vote for Thisman and vote for Thatman; not to plump, as they valued the state of parties and the national prosperity (both of great importance to them, I think!), but, by returning Thisman and Thatman, each nought without the other, to compound a glorious and immortal whole. Surely the skeleton is nowhere more cruelly ironical in the original monkish idea!

Pondering in my mind the far-seeing schemes of Thisman and Thatman, and of the public blessing called Party, for staying the degeneracy, physical and moral, of many thousands (who shall say how many?) of the English race; for devising employment useful to the community, for those who want but to work and live; for equalising rates, cultivating waste lands, facilitating emigration, and above all things, saving and utilising the oncoming generations, and thereby changing ever-growing national weakness into strength; pondering in my mind, I say, these hopeful exertions, I turned down a narrow street to look into a house or two.

It was a dark street with a dead wall on one side. Nearly all the outer doors of the houses stood open. I took the first entry and knocked at a parlour door. Might I come in? I might, if I plased, Sur.

The woman of the room (Irish) had picked up some long strips of wood, about some wharf or barge, and they had just now been thrust into the otherwise empty

grate, to make two iron pots boil. There was some fish in one, and there were some potatoes in the other. The flare of the burning wood enabled me to see a table and a broken chair or so, and some old cheap crockery ornaments about the chimneypiece. It was not until I had spoken with the woman a few minutes that I saw a horrible brown heap on the floor in a corner, which, but for previous experience in this dismal wise, I might not have suspected to be "the bed." There was something thrown upon it, and I asked what that was?

"'Tis the poor craythur that stays here, Sur, and 'tis very bad she is, and 'tis very bad she's been this long time, and 'tis better she'll never be, and 'tis slape she doos all day, and 'tis wake she doos all night, and 'tis the lead, Sur."

"The what?"

"The lead, Sur. Sure 'tis the lead-mills, where the women gets took on at eighteenpence a day, Sur, when they makes applicaytion early enough and is lucky and wanted, and 'tis lead-pisoned she is, Sur, and some of them gits lead-pisoned soon and some of them gets lead-pisoned later, and some but not many niver, and 'tis all according to the constitooshun, Sur, and some constitooshuns is strong and some is weak, and her constitooshun is lead-pisoned bad as can be, Sur, and her brain is coming out at her ear, and it hurts her dreadful, and that's what it is and niver no more and niver no less, Sur."

The sick young woman moaning here, the speaker bent over her, took a bandage from her head, and threw open a back door to let in the daylight upon it, from the smallest and most miserable backyard I ever saw.

"That's what cooms from her, Sur, being lead-pisoned, and it cooms from her night and day the poor sick craythur, and the pain of it is dreadful, and God he knows that my husband has walked the sthreets these four days being a labourer and is walking them now and is ready to work and no work for him and no fire and no food but the bit in the pot, and no more than ten shillings in a fortnight, God be good to us, and it is poor we are and dark it is and could it is indeed!"

Knowing that I could compensate myself thereafter for my self-denial, if I saw fit, I had resolved that I would give nothing in the course of these visits. I did this to try the people. I may state at once that my closest observation could not detect any indication whatever of an expectation that I would give money; they were grateful to be talked to, about their miserable affairs, and sympathy was plainly a comfort to them; but they neither asked for money in any case, nor showed the least trace of surprise or disappointment or resentment at my giving none.

The woman's married daughter had by this time come down from her room on the floor above, to join in the conversation. She herself had been to the lead-mills very early that morning to be "took on," but had not succeeded. She had four children, and her husband, also a water-side labourer and then out seeking work, seemed in no better case as to finding it, than her father. She was English, and by nature of a buxom figure and cheerful. Both in her poor dress, and in her mother's, there was an effort to keep up some appearance of neatness. She knew all about the sufferings of the unfortunate invalid, and all about the lead-poisoning, and how the symptoms came on, and how they grew: having often seen them. The very smell when you stood inside the door of the works was enough to knock you down, she said, yet she was going back again to get "took on." What could she do? Better be ulcerated and paralysed for eighteenpence a day, while it lasted, than see the children starve.

A dark and squalid cupboard in this room, touching the back door and all manner of offence, had been for some time the sleeping-place of the sick young woman. But the nights being now wintry, and the blankets and coverlets "gone to the leaving shop," she lay all night where she lay all day, and was lying then. The woman of the room, her husband, this most miserable patient, and two others, lay on the one brown heap together for warmth.

"God bless you, sir, and thank you!" were the parting words from these people—gratefully spoken too—with which I left this place.

Some streets away, I tapped at another parlour door on another ground floor. Looking in, I found a man, his wife, and four children, sitting at a washing stool by way of table, at their dinner of bread and infused tea-leaves. There was a very scanty cinderous fire in the grate by which they sat, and there was a tent bedstead in the room with a bed upon it and a coverlet. The man did not rise when I went in, nor during my stay, but civilly inclined his head on my pulling off my hat,

and, in answer to my inquiry whether I might ask him a question or two, said, "Certainly." There being a window at each end of this room, back and front, it might have been ventilated; but it was shut up tight, to keep the cold out, and was very sickening.

The wife, an intelligent quick woman, rose and stood at her husband's elbow, and he glanced up at her as if for help. It soon appeared that he was rather deaf. He was a slow simple fellow of about thirty.

"What was he by trade?"

"Gentleman asks what are you by trade, John?"

"I am a boiler-maker;" looking about him with an exceedingly perplexed air, as if for a boiler that had unaccountably vanished.

"He ain't a mechanic you understand, sir," the wife put in, "he's only a labourer."

"Are you in work?"

He looked up at his wife again. "Gentleman says are you in work, John?"

"In work!" cried this forlorn boiler-maker, staring aghast at his wife, and then working his vision's way very slowly round to me; "Lord, no!"

"Ah! He ain't indeed!" said the poor woman, shaking her head, as she looked at the four children in succession, and then at him.

"Work!" said the boiler-maker, still seeking that evaporated boiler, first in my countenance, then in the air, and then in the features of his second son at his knee: "I wish I *was* in work! I haven't had more than a day's work to do, this three weeks."

"How have you lived?"

A faint gleam of admiration lighted up the face of the would-be boiler-maker, as he stretched out the short sleeve of his threadbare canvas jacket, and replied, pointing her out: "on the work of the wife."

I forget where boiler-making had gone to, or where he supposed it had gone to; but he added some resigned information on that head, coupled with an expression of his belief that it was never coming back.

The cheery helpfulness of the wife was very remarkable. She did slop-work; made pea-jackets. She produced the pea-jacket then in hand, and spread it out upon the bed: the only piece of furniture in the room on which to spread it. She showed how much of it she made, and how much was afterwards finished off by the machine. According to her calculation at the moment, deducting what her trimming cost her, she got for making a pea-jacket tenpence halfpenny, and she could make one in something less than two days. But, you see, it come to her through two hands, and of course it didn't come through the second hand for nothing. Why did it come through the second hand at all? Why, this way. The second hand took the risk of the given-out work, you see. If she had money enough to pay the security deposit —call it two pound—she could get the work from the first hand, and so the second would not have to be deducted for. But having no money at all, the second hand come in and took its profit, and so the whole worked down to tenpence halfpenny. Having explained all this with great intelligence, even with some little pride, and without a whine or murmur, she folded her work again, sat down by her husband's side at the washing stool, and resumed her dinner of dry bread. Mean as the meal was, on the bare board, with its old gallipots for cups, and what not other sordid makeshifts; shabby as the woman was in dress, and toning down towards the Bosjesman colour, with want of nutriment and washing; there was positively a dignity in her, as the family anchor just holding the poor shipwrecked boiler-maker's bark. When I left the room, the boiler-maker's eyes were slowly turned towards her, as if his last hope of ever again seeing that vanished boiler lay in her direction.

These people had never applied for parish relief but once; and that was when the husband met with a disabling accident at his work.

Not many doors from here, I went into a room on the first floor. The woman apologised for its being in "an untidy mess." The day was Saturday, and she was boiling the children's clothes in a saucepan on the hearth. There was nothing else into which she could have put them. There was no crockery, or tinware, or tub, or bucket. There was an old gallipot or two, and there was a broken bottle or so, and there were some broken boxes for seats. The last small scraping of coals left, was raked together in a corner of the floor. There were some rags in an open cupboard, also on the floor. In a corner of the room was a crazy old French bedstead, with a man lying on his back upon it in a ragged pilot jacket, and rough oilskin fantail hat. The room was perfectly black. It was difficult to believe, at first, that it was not purposely coloured black: the walls were so begrimed.

As I stood opposite the woman boiling the children's clothes—she had not even a piece of soap to wash them with—and apologising for her occupation, I could take in all these things without appearing to notice them, and could even correct my inventory. I had missed, at the first glance, some half a pound of bread in the otherwise empty safe, an old red ragged crinoline hanging on the handle of the door by which I had entered, and certain fragments of rusty iron scattered on the floor, which looked like broken tools and a piece of stove-pipe. A child stood looking on. On the box nearest to the fire sat two younger children; one, a delicate and pretty little creature whom the other sometimes kissed.

This woman, like the last, was woefully shabby, and was degenerating to the Bosjesman complexion. But her figure, and the ghost of a certain vivacity about her, and the spectre of a dimple in her cheek, carried my memory strangely back to the old days of the Adelphi Theatre, London, when Mrs. Fitzwilliam was the friend of Victorine.

"May I ask you what your husband is?"

"He's a coal-porter, sir." With a glance and a sigh towards the bed.

"Is he out of work?"

"Oh yes, sir, and work's at all times very very scanty with him, and now he's laid up."

"It's my legs," said the man upon the bed, "I'll unroll 'em." And immediately began.

"Have you any older children?"

"I have a daughter that does the needlework, and I have a son that does what he can. She's at her work now, and he's trying for work."

"Do they live here?"

"They sleep here. They can't afford to pay more rent, and so they come here at night. The rent is very hard upon us. It's rose upon us too, now — sixpence a week—on account of these new changes in the law, about the rates. We are a week behind; the landlord's been shaking and rattling at that door, frightful; he says he'll turn us out. I don't know what's to come of it."

The man upon the bed ruefully interposed: "Here's my legs. The skin's broke, besides the swelling. I have had a many kicks, working, one way and another."

He looked at his legs (which were much discoloured and misshapen) for a while, and then appearing to remember that they were not popular with his family, rolled them up again, as if they were something in the nature of maps or plans that were not wanted to be referred to, lay hopelessly down on his back once more with his fantail hat over his face, and stirred not.

"Do your eldest son and daughter sleep in that cupboard?"

"Yes," replied the woman.

"With the children?"

"Yes. We have to get together for warmth. We have little to cover us."

"Have you nothing by you to eat but the piece of bread I see there?"

"Nothing. And we had the rest of the loaf for our breakfast, with water. I don't know what's to come of it."

"Have you no prospect of improvement?"

"If my eldest son earns anything to-day, he'll bring it home. Then we shall have something to eat to-night, and may be able to do something towards the rent. If not, I don't know what's to come of it."

"This is a sad state of things."

"Yes, sir, it's a hard, hard life. Take care of the stairs as you go sir—they're broken—and good day, sir!"

These poople had a mortal dread of entering the workhouse, and received no out-of-door relief.

In another room in still another tenement, I found a very decent woman with five children—the last, a baby, and she herself a patient of the parish doctor—to whom, her husband being in the Hospital, the Union allowed for the support of herself and family, four shillings a week and five loaves. I suppose when Thisman, M.P., and Thatman, M.P., and the public blessing Party, lay their heads together in course of time, and come to an Equalisation of Rating, she may go down the Dance of Death to the tune of sixpence more.

I could enter no other houses for that one while, for I could not bear the contemplation of the children. Such heart as I had summoned to sustain me against the miseries of the adults, failed me when I looked at the children. I saw how young they were, how hungry, how serious and still. I thought of them, sick and dying in those lairs. I could think of them dead, without anguish; but to think of them, so suffering and so dying, quite unmanned me.

Down by the river's bank in Ratcliffe, I was turning upward by a side street, therefore, to regain the railway, when my

eyes rested on the inscription across the road, "East London Children's Hospital." I could scarcely have seen an inscription better suited to my frame of mind, and I went across and went straight in.

I found the Children's Hospital established in an old sail-loft or storehouse, of the roughest nature, and on the simplest means. There were trap-doors in the floors where goods had been hoisted up and down; heavy feet and heavy weights had started every knot in the well-trodden planking; inconvenient bulks and beams and awkward staircases perplexed my passage through the wards. But I found it airy, sweet, and clean. In its seven-and-thirty beds I saw but little beauty, for starvation in the second or third generation takes a pinched look; but I saw the sufferings both of infancy and childhood tenderly assuaged, I heard the little patients answering to pet playful names, the light touch of a delicate lady laid bare the wasted sticks of arms for me to pity; and the claw-like little hands, as she did so, twined themselves lovingly around her wedding-ring.

One baby mite there was, as pretty as any of Raphael's angels. The tiny head was bandaged, for water on the brain, and it was suffering with acute bronchitis too, and made from time to time a plaintive, though not impatient or complaining little sound. The smooth curve of the cheeks and of the chin was faultless in its condensation of infantine beauty, and the large bright eyes were most lovely. It happened, as I stopped at the foot of the bed, that these eyes rested upon mine, with that wistful expression of wondering thoughtfulness which we all know sometimes in very little children. They remained fixed on mine, and never turned from me while I stood there. When the utterance of that plaintive sound shook the little form, the gaze still remained unchanged. I felt as though the child implored me to tell the story of the little hospital in which it was sheltered, to any gentle heart I could address. Laying my world-worn hand upon the little unmarked clasped hand at the chin, I gave it a silent promise that I would do so.

A gentleman and lady, a young husband and wife, have bought and fitted up this building for its present noble use, and have quietly settled themselves in it as its medical officers and directors. Both have had considerable practical experience of medicine and surgery; he, as house-surgeon of a great London Hospital; she, as a very earnest student, tested by severe examination, and also as a nurse of the sick poor, during the prevalence of cholera. With every qualification to lure them away, with youth and accomplishments and tastes and habits that can have no response in any breast near them, close begirt by every repulsive circumstance inseparable from such a neighbourhood, there they dwell. They live in the Hospital itself, and their rooms are on its first floor. Sitting at their dinner table they could hear the cry of one of the children in pain. The lady's piano, drawing materials, books, and other such evidences of refinement, are as much a part of the rough place as the iron bedsteads of the little patients. They are put to shifts for room, like passengers on board ship. The dispenser of medicines (attracted to them, not by self-interest, but by their own magnetism and that of their cause) sleeps in a recess in the dining-room, and has his washing apparatus in the sideboard.

Their contented manner of making the best of the things around them, I found so pleasantly inseparable from their usefulness! Their pride in this partition that we put up ourselves, or in that partition that we took down, or in that other partition that we moved, or in the stove that was given us for the waiting-room, or in our nightly conversion of the little consulting-room into a smoking-room. Their admiration of the situation, if we could only get rid of its one objectionable incident, the coal-yard at the back! "Our hospital carriage, presented by a friend, and very useful." That was my presentation to a perambulator, for which a coach-house had been discovered in a corner down-stairs, just large enough to hold it. Coloured prints in all stages of preparation for being added to those already decorating the wards, were plentiful; a charming wooden phenomenon of a bird, with an impossible top-knot, who ducked his head when you set a counter weight going, had been inaugurated as a public statue that very morning; and trotting about among the beds, on familiar terms with all the patients, was a comical mongrel dog, called Poodles. This comical dog (quite a tonic in himself) was found characteristically starving at the door of the Institution, and was taken in and fed, and has lived here ever since. An admirer of his mental endowments has presented him with a collar bearing the legend, "Judge not Poodles by external appear-

ances." He was merrily wagging his tail on a boy's pillow when he made this modest appeal to me.

When this Hospital was first opened in January of the present year, the people could not possibly conceive but that somebody paid for the services rendered there; and were disposed to claim them as a right, and to find fault if out of temper. They soon came to understand the case better, and have much increased in gratitude. The mothers of the patients avail themselves very freely of the visiting rules; the fathers, often on Sundays. There is an unreasonable (but still, I think, touching and intelligible), tendency in the parents to take a child away to its wretched home, if on the point of death. One boy who had been thus carried off on a rainy night, when in a violent state of inflammation, and who had been afterwards brought back, had been recovered with exceeding difficulty; but he was a jolly boy, with a specially strong interest in his dinner, when I saw him.

Insufficient food and unwholesome living are the main causes of disease among these small patients. So, nourishment, cleanliness, and ventilation, are the main remedies. Discharged patients are looked after, and invited to come and dine now and then; so are certain famishing creatures who never were patients. Both the lady and the gentleman are well acquainted, not only with the histories of the patients and their families, but with the characters and circumstances of great numbers of their neighbours: of these they keep a register. It is their common experience that people sinking down by inches into deeper and deeper poverty, will conceal it, even from them, if possible, unto the very last extremity.

The nurses of this Hospital are all young; ranging, say, from nineteen to four-and-twenty. They have, even within these narrow limits, what many well-endowed Hospitals would not give them: a comfortable room of their own in which to take their meals. It is a beautiful truth that interest in the children and sympathy with their sorrows, bind these young women to their places far more strongly than any other consideration could. The best skilled of the nurses came originally from a kindred neighbourhood, almost as poor, and she knew how much the work was needed. She is a fair dressmaker. The Hospital cannot pay her as many pounds in the year as there are months in it, and one day the lady regarded it as a duty to speak to her about her improving her prospects and following her trade. No, she said; she could never be so useful, or so happy, elsewhere, any more; she must stay among the children. And she stays. One of the nurses, as I passed her, was washing a baby-boy. Liking her pleasant face, I stopped to speak to her charge: a common, bullet-headed, frowning charge enough, laying hold of his own nose with a slippery grasp, and staring very solemnly out of a blanket. The melting of the pleasant face into delighted smiles as this young gentleman gave an unexpected kick and laughed at me, was almost worth my previous pain.

An affecting play was acted in Paris years ago, called The Children's Doctor. As I parted from my Children's Doctor now in question, I saw in his easy black necktie, in his loose buttoned black frock coat, in his pensive face, in the flow of his dark hair, in his eyelashes, in the very turn of his moustache, the exact realisation of the Paris artist's ideal as it was presented on the stage. But no romancer that I know of, has had the boldness to prefigure the life and home of this young husband and young wife, in the Children's Hospital in the East of London.

I came away from Ratcliffe by the Stepney railway station to the Terminus at Fenchurch-street. Any one who will reverse that route, may retrace my steps.

THE MADRAS BOY.

THE Madras boy is not a boy. The word is a corruption of the Telugu word "boyi," a palanquin bearer. There is nothing which sounds stranger to a new-comer in Madras than the constant cries of Boy! He makes a call, and immediately on his entering the room the lady of the house cries, Boy! This startles him. But he is reassured by hearing "Yes, mam," answered, and seeing a native (probably of advanced years) appear and receive orders to have the punkah pulled. The master of the house comes in, greets his visitor, says he must stop to tiffin, and immediately roars, Boy! Again the domestic appears, and is ordered to have the horse taken out of the gharie; and so on at short intervals the silvery call or the trumpet roar of, Boy! resounds through the house. Ladies are generally some time before they can bring themselves to be constantly calling Boy! but in a bachelor's house the cry seems to be ever in the air. "Boy, cheroot!" "Boy, fire!" "Boy, soda!" And ever and anon, when the Boy is dozing, or far off, one hears the cry "crescendo," until it is evident that the caller must be red in the face

with anger and exertion. For, nothing ruffles a Madrasee more, than to shout Boy in vain.

Ramasami may be taken as the generic name of the Madras Boy; just as Jeames is that of the London footman. There are Pronasamis, Chimasamis, Appasamis, Autonis, Lazaruses, Gabriels, and a host of other names, but these are seldom used or even known by masters and mistresses. It is as a bachelor's factotum that Ramasami is seen to the best advantage. If his master's salary be small, Ramasami will manage his house, wait at table, black his boots, take care of his clothes, sew on his buttons—in short do the work of half a dozen servants—and will smoke only a few of master's cheroots, and will cheat him only a little. As his master's salary increases Ramasami takes care that more servants shall be engaged, and that the expenses shall increase; he smokes more of his master's cheroots, and cheats him a little more. But he is generally so willing, so handy, and after all cheats so discreetly, that a Madras Boy is generally acknowledged to be the best bachelor's servant in India. In a family where his accounts are carefully examined by the mistress daily, where there are plenty of servants under him, when he is not kept up to the mark as regards fire and cool soda, when he is not liable to be called on unexpectedly in the dead of night to prepare hot grilled bones and cool beer, then he generally degenerates into a fat, lazy, commonplace butler.

In many ways all Boys are strangely alike, as if they were all members of one family, or had all been brought up together. This is particularly noticeable in their English, which is of the "pigeon" kind, but much better than that of the Chinese. The use of the present participle and the word only is a marked peculiarity. "What master saying that only I doing" conveys to you Ramasami's intention of acting according to your order. The word "done" is also invariably used as an auxiliary to express the completion of an act. "Boy, have you done that?"—"Done do, sir." The simple perfect, when used by Ramasami, can never be trusted as having its proper grammatical force. Ask the Boy whether the brandy is gone, and if he says "Yes, sir, gone," should you find ten minutes afterwards that it is not gone, you must not look upon this as a great departure from truth. But if you ask him, "Has the brandy *done* go?" and he says "Yes, sir, *done* go," then, if it have not really gone, you are justified in calling him what David in his haste called all men. Some Boys have adopted, as pets of their own, particular English words; one of the first Boys the writer had in the country, had so adopted the word "about." He had originally been a cook-boy in a regiment, and having learnt slang and the use of his fists, he constantly aired both accomplishments when he had differences of opinion with the other servants or bazaar-men. One day he was brought to his master, guarded by two police peons with guns, and a third with a drawn sword, who declared that the Boy had nearly killed a man. The Boy was asked what he had to say for himself? His reply was to the effect that he had quarrelled with the man, but had only slanged him, and that somebody else had done the beating: which he expressed thus: "I only jaw about; 'nother man lick about." But the schoolmaster is abroad in India, as elsewhere, and it seems likely that before long the Boy will speak English as correctly as the ordinary run of servants at home. It cannot be long before bells will be introduced into the houses of Europeans in India, and they will sound the death-knell of the cry, "Boy!"

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER V.

MONDAY.—I am not sorry I adopted that resolution of forswearing the Kursaal, its reading-rooms, &c., though I *did* see Mr. Lewis, the clergyman of the English chapel, going in and sitting down, and reading his Galignani. Can he know what he is doing? He is on the spot, a resident, and it is, as it were, in his parish; at all events it is his concern. I even saw him enter from the colonnade, go up the steps into the great tavern entrance and pass through. He was looking for some one. Still, if I were to refine on the matter, this garden where I am now, is theirs, kept by their gardeners. This very seat on which I sit, was paid for by them. What do you say, Dora? Send me some little bit of casuistry to help me over the matter

What scenes I do see, even so far off as I am now; hints, as it were, of a whole history. Thus have I come in late to a theatre, and, standing in the box lobby, have peeped in through the little glass window in the door. That glimpse has a strange mystery, from the fact of all having been worked up to a point. The situation seems changed, while we who look are in quite another region—a long way behind, as it were. I have noticed a fair-haired youth with a gold "pinch-nose," and who is certainly not more than twenty, and on his arm is a charming little French girl of seventeen, round and rosy, and dressed in the most piquant way imaginable. I soon found out that they are just married, not further back than a month. They were supremely happy, like children running from one thing to another, and enjoying everything with a charming happiness and animation. He wore a straw-coloured silk coat and white hat. She, a most coquettish little hat and a pink and white short dress. On the first day I had

noticed them standing at the mouth of what I call the "yawning cave," hesitating gently, she looking in with the strangest air of curiosity, half in amazement, half in awe. Then I see them go in, and somehow that seems, by a sort of instinct, to be for me the beginning of something that would end tragically. The look of supreme happiness seemed, I suppose, to imply a contrast and supplement of disaster. In half an hour I saw them come back, she triumphant, fluttering — he with a complacent and boyish smile, looking at something bright in his hand. She skipped and danced and clapped her hands. I supposed they had won. They were children, and I had a surprising interest in them—I know not why I dined to-day at the Four Seasons Hotel, which at these places, is always said to be a most gay and festive looking hotel, with orange trees in front, and a kind of scene-painting air. So an old gentleman, who had been all round the watering places, told me. He could not account for it, he said, but "there it was." I accounted for it to him by the invincible power of names. Give a girl, I said, a pretty and romantic name, like Geraldine, or Dorcas, or Violet, and she will be sure in some degree to fall into the *key* of that pretty music. He did not seem to see it, but grunted and moved away from me. Another man said, "he supposed it paid," which did not touch the matter. Their table d'hôtes are certainly the most festive way of eating a dinner. There is such variety in the faces, such pretty, intellectual, stupid, heavy faces—faces, indeed, that seem to have been turned all day long towards that dinner, and wistfully expecting it. A long narrow room, yet so bright and airy, and looking on the street; I can fancy nothing so cheerful. Every one is in good humour; and even the waiters have a festive air, principally, I believe, from their being boys and boyish, as is the custom here, and not the mouldy, ancient, clumsy-legged, clumsy-fingered veterans who do duty with us. And what a good dinner—what a choice of wine, instead of our limited sherry, and claret, and "Bass." The little flasks dot the table down. The affenthaler ordinary, but good; the yellow hocks, infinite in variety; the better Assmanhauser, and the hockheimer sparkling, all at *such* moderate prices. I see *complete* families pour in, and take up position in line, father, stout mother, pleasant daughters, and the conceited son. Then the dinner sets in like a torrent; all those pleasan German dishes. Those vegetables which we know not of in England, and best of all, those delicious fowls, wherewith arrives the late but welcome salad. It does seem to me that it arrives at the precise and fitting moment, with a pleasant sense of expectancy going before it, he and his friend, the fowl. My dear Dora will hardly think that this can be her old invalid that is speaking.

On this day I find myself seated next to the little husband and wife of the morning, who come in full of delight and satisfaction and smiling, they know not why. I confess I am glad to be near so much innocence, and also on account of a little scheme I have in view. With such a pair, it is not difficult to begin a conversation. They were glad of the sympathy. My dear Dora knows that my stock of French is tolerably respectable, and that I can put it to fair use. They spoke together, and told me everything about themselves. They were not rich, but had enough. They were enjoying themselves so. It was the most delicious place in the world. "It was Heaven itself," she said; "and do you know," she added, "all the money we made—that is, he made—to-day, and so easily—eight napoleons; and out of it he bought me this sweet little brooch." And she showed on her breast what was certainly a very charming little ornament. This naïveté and her agreeable prattle began to interest me a great deal; but I could see there was in *him* a certain boyish self-sufficiency—a latent idea that this *gaming success was chiefly owing to his own cleverness.* He talked very wisely about the principles. I quietly ventured to hint that luck might change, as it did so often and so fatally. But he only laughed. Just as dinner was nearly over, a friend sent in to him; he went out, and I was left with the charming little wife. Something inspired me to seize the opportunity and give a little warning to this interesting young creature.

"Your husband," I said, "seems quite excited about his success; but may I give you a piece of advice? This beginning ends always in the same way. You know not how fatal is this spell, once it gets any influence. This rage for play, if it takes possession of any one, destroys all else—love, happiness, everything else. I know it, and every one here knows it." This way of putting it was a little artful, and I saw it had great effect. The pretty face looked a little scared. I went on. "I speak sincerely and in your interest, though I am a mere stranger; and I *do* advise you and

warn you to take care and not encourage your husband in this pursuit. There is no harm done as yet, and be content with your little spoils." This may seem a little too indulgent, too complacent, to the evil practice, against which I have sworn war to the knife, to the death, and from which, with the blessing of Heaven, I shall rescue many. But such a foe it is pardonable to meet with craft like his own.

He had come back, but I saw she had grown thoughtful. It was something to do a little bit of good, even in this cheap way. I see them at night, hovering about the yawning entrance to the cave, she, with a little hesitation, whispering him earnestly, and looking in with trepidation. They do not see me. They walk away, but, alas, come back, and enter.

CHAPTER VI.

TUESDAY.—But I must leave these minor things quite out of sight, to come to the strangest thing that has happened, the most mysterious and inconceivable. Who could have dreamt of it? And yet I am not sorry. Dora, dear, prepared for something dramatic! Let me begin calmly. Last night, after the young pair had gone in, I was sitting under the long glass colonnade of the terrace, looking down on the crowd in those gardens, lit up by the twinkling lamps, and which have such a charm for me. Along that colonnade are about a hundred little tables, all crowded with eager and lively people, sipping drinks, taking iced beer, champagne, happy winners, and more dismal losers. The waiters are flying up and down, hurrying to and fro, shouting orders; while below, among the green trees and flowers, are the crowds seated, and on the right the illuminated kiosque, with the delicious Prussian band pouring out their strains. "Ravishing" is but a poor word for these accomplished musicians, who belong to the Thirty-fourth Regiment, and are led by the skilful "chapel-master," Parlow. Their vast strength and breath of sound, their rich instruments, with every instrument made the most of, their exquisite taste, volume, clearness, distinctness, and mastery of the most difficult passages, makes their performance almost entrancing. Hear them play three overtures—William Tell, Tännhauser, and Oberon—and the musician will be amazed as well as enraptured, the marvellous violin passages of the last being performed like so much child's play—just as an accomplished pianoforte player runs up and down the keys. Hear them, too, in some fantasia on airs from L'Africaine or Faust, and revel in the taste and feeling of the solo, and the dramatic bursts and crashes, and the "hurrying" and lingering of the time, as though they were an opera orchestra. When we think of our creatures—those groups of hodmen and mechanics who form what is by courtesy termed "a military band," those mere grinders and sawyers of music, who play as though they would dig or hammer—when we think, I say, of our "crack" regiments, our Guards, formed out of the very pink of professionals, and see how mediocre is the result, one must feel a little humiliation and some envy, and should be glad to come this distance to hear those Prussians. I can hear them, too, with a safe conscience, for they do not belong to the administration.

But I am putting off this wonderful surprise. I am sitting there, listening, close, also, to the mouth of the cave, which has still for me that sense of mystery, when I hear some angry voices, and two men are coming down the steps in excitement. One is tall, and in a white Panama hat, and very excited. I hear him say, "It is always the way when I listen to your infernal talk. I'd have had a hundred in my hand now but for you. I'd like to pitch you down these steps, on your face! Go—leave me alone!"

The voice seemed familiar to me, so cold and grating, with all its excitement, that I seemed to recal it perfectly. Unconsciously I started up to be quite certain, and, on the noise, he turned and looked at me. He knew me; I knew him. His face turned livid, and a spasm of fury passed over it.

"Grainger!"

"Austen!"

He advanced towards me, and for a moment I thought he meant some violence. But he suddenly checked himself, and then walked away, down the terrace. Then, as suddenly turned back and came up to me.

After a pause, "So," he went on, "*you* are here. Did you know that I was here?"

"No, Grainger," I answered; "I did not."

"What, no new scheme on hand? No, I should say not; for you had better wait, my friend, until you know whether the old account has been closed."

"The only scheme I have," I answered, "is to get back some health, which is nearly gone from me."

"Ay. But do you know all that has gone from me—*all that you took from me?*

Eh?—*stole from me!* What do you say? Answer!"

Again there was something so threatening in his manner, that I half moved back, as if to defend myself.

"Oh, don't be afraid," he said; "we dare not do these things in this place. Here kellner, come here, will you! Bring some red wine here, strong and good, and don't be an hour, with your 'V'la, monsieur,' and all that humbug. Come, sit down, Mr. Austen; you may as well; I am not going to be violent, so you needn't be afraid. I want to let you know something which you ought to know."

"Grainger," I said, "when all that took place, you had your opportunity. I met you fairly and——"

"*Met me fairly!*" he repeated, his eyes dropping on me with a flash, "can you say that?" Then he laughed. "My good friend that is all so long ago. An old story like that must not be exhumed. Let it rot away in the ground. Dead leaves, my boy. If you don't rake 'em up, I promise you I shan't. There. Come! let us have something, as earnest. You shall pay for me, who was the loser, and I *think* the injured man."

Something in this phrase struck me, and I felt there was some truth in what he said. He was the defeated party; I was the victor, and ought to be generous. "What shall it be," I said, "champagne?" "Do you take me for an American?" he said, with a laugh. "No, sir; cognac. Now let us talk. I have forgiven and forgotten all that—though it ruined me. She had a sort of infatuation over me, that girl—I mean, Mrs. Austen. If she had come here I would have followed her. I'd have played my body and soul, that is if I had seen a chance. You had it all your own way. How does she look—does she hate me? Come! And yet a good deal is on her gentle head. This is my life now, poor me; a 'hell,' to many others. You saw what I was then, a gentleman, at least well off, respected—own that! Well, I had to leave the army; I did something I ought not to have done, from sheer desperation. Yes, I did, and sank lower and lower, and all this was your joint work; but I don't want to blame you. By Jove, it is I who am raking up the dead leaves after all! Ah! here's the cognac."

I felt a pity for him. There was truth in what he said. Since you, Dora, had been saved from him, all these troubles had come upon him. He had grown desperate; he was at least privileged to speak as he pleased, and have that slight consolation. I saw, too, that he was altered. At *that* time he was considered by the women a good-looking man, his face having a little of that rude gauntness which is not unpleasing. He had large eyes, and a black irregular beard and moustache. Now he had grown careless in his dress. I knew how much that portended, and felt a deep pity for him.

"Grainger," I said, "it was hard for you, for I know you loved her. But I declare solemnly here, that my loving her had nothing to do with it, and you know yourself, Grainger, the marriage with you could not have been for her happiness after that business——"

His brow contracted. "I know what you mean," he said. "That was false, false in everything. False, as I sit here, and hope to be—well I have not much hope of *that*."

"They *said* it was true," I said; "but even to have such a rumour, and a fair innocent young girl, admit yourself, Grainger, it could not be."

He answered in a low voice, "It was all false, a lie, an invention. There was the sting. Of course, I could not prove it; but suppose it untrue, what punishment would you say was enough for those who did me so horrid an injury—would a whole life be too long to devote to punishing the doer of such an injury?"

"I suppose you mean me?" I said.

"I *did* mean you *then*," he said. "I suppose, if there had been opportunity, of course I could have killed you. But that is all over, all past and gone. Nothing could make Roly Poly as he was before. The egg-shell is broken, and the yolk run out. So tell me about yourself, and about her. What brings you here?"

There was something so frank, so generous, so valorous in this way of taking the thing, that with an involuntary motion I put out my hand and grasped his. Shall I say, too, I felt a sudden twinge of conscience; and had all along a dim foreboding that the story might not have been true, or at least, have got its colouring of truth, from what might have been interested motives on my side? I was too much concerned, perhaps, to be impartial, and if he *was* innocent, then some share in this work might be laid to my account. What was plainly my duty was to try and compensate in some way, at least by kindness—for I had not much else at my command—for so cruel a wrong as this. I com-

plied heartily with his wish; told him all that brought me here, and the business I was about. He listened attentively. Then we wandered back, step by step, slowly and agreeably too, till we got to the old, old days, where we called up all those scenes,—Dora, the military balls, the pleasant nights, and pleasant days; what seemed like pictures or scenes out of a beautiful play seen in childhood—misty, indistinct, but delightful to think over. He spoke charmingly, regretfully, and even tenderly.

"Those were happy and innocent days," he said. "Scarcely happy after all for me, though there is a sort of happiness in such suffering. Yet compared with all I have gone through since——! Still in this life," he added, nodding at the cave behind us, "there is an excitement, too—it helps one to forget."

"But think, how will it end?" I said, with some excitement. "It cannot have the slow progress of what you call a life. It must hurry on suddenly to destruction. Oh, Grainger, stop, I implore of you, before it be too late!"

"But if it *be* too late," he said, "and was too late years ago? But I don't know if I saw any road.—it is all a jungle, or my eyes have got dim. Still, since you have talked to me, and brought before me those days, I don't feel quite so bad. We will speak of those things again—her name to me may have some power, at least, and if you will not think it a trouble or a bore while you *are* here——"

I wrung his hand warmly. "I would take it as a favour," I said; "oh, let me help you in some way, and if I *have* injured you, let me at least try and keep you from this life, which must end in misery and ruin."

"Well, we shall see," he said.

Two people came out of the cave a little hurriedly. It was the youthful husband walking first, by himself, his hands in his pockets, his face flushed. She was tripping behind him, with the most dismal depicted expression on her face. In a moment that small hand, it had a tiny black mitten on, was on his arm. It seemed to receive an impatient welcome there, and dropped again.

Grainger followed my eyes, "Ah!" he said, "the old story!"

Hers met mine, and they seemed to say, "Oh, how right you were;" I knew I was—an instinct told me I should be so. After all, bred in a country town, as I was, my dear Dora, I have learnt to judge a little of human nature. It comes by a sort of instinct. I wish I had been wrong in this mistake; but the same instinct whispers to me that this is but the end of the first act. Poor little pair!

"That was the way it was with me at first," said Grainger; "I know that story pretty well. I have seen it here over and over again. Will you come in with me and see me try my hand—a new face brings new luck. And yet to-night it seems to jar upon me—you have brought me back into the old days. But still what can I do. As well tell a man who has sold himself to brandy, not to drink. Besides, what would be the use? I may as well finish, as I have begun. I have nothing to look to now."

"I cannot tell you how this pains me, Grainger," I said, really distressed. "O, if my words could but have some little effect! Do—as you say the holy influence of the past is upon you—just for *this* night abstain. Even for Dora's sake, whom you once so loved, and who would rejoice to know that her name even had that little power left. If you knew its effect on *me!*"

A very curious look came into his face. He turned it off with a laugh. "Well, a night doesn't make much difference. I'm a fool, I know. There, we'll walk about instead."

I felt almost a thrill of pleasure at this unexpected success. My pet's name is, indeed, an amulet to conjure with. After so many years, and at so many hundred miles distance, to have such a power! And I think *I* may fairly claim a small share of the credit. Earnestness and sincerity go some way: perhaps, too, that little magnanimity. There was some little tact in my reception of him; others might have grown confused or angry. Here am I praising myself; but I am in such good spirits. Put up your gentle prayer for him, Dora.

Wednesday.—I found Grainger last night really entertaining and amusing. Hitherto a good many of the people here have been like the figures in front of the old grinding organs, revolving, and glittering, and eccentric to look at, but still without names or characters. Grainger knows them all, names, dates, and addresses. *There* was the great banker, there was the great speculator, the man who could change paper into gold by a touch, by a word even, and who was now wandering about here, as poor as I or my companion. Did I see that ascetical-looking-man? that was the Bishop of Gravesend; or that woman in orange and black, the famous Phryne

Coralie, English by birth, but who had risen to the highest rank in whatever "carrière" she followed. There was the great singer, who had shrieked and declaimed the tragedy queens of opera, who had denounced the craven Pollio many thousand nights in her life, who had bearded wicked Counts de Luna as many times more, who had sang in the garden turning over the stage jewels with grinning Mephistopheles and enraptured Faust; and here she was taking an ice. Here on the terrace is the smaller lady, who sits on a lower throne, but has far more subjects and adorers. Here is that Baker, known to every one who comes to these places, who dogs lords and ladies, and makes them stand while he pours in his little adulatory small shot; and here is quite a happy hunting ground for those ladies of good connexion and title even, whose wings have been a little burnt as they fluttered through town drawing-rooms, but who find them quite sufficient to support them here, the atmosphere is so dense.

He is infinitely amusing is Grainger, his stories and his scandal, which I can quite conceive to be perfectly true. I can see he has got into spirits as he tells these things; and though it is rather light and unprofitable food for the mind, it takes off his mind from things more dangerous. What we said last night has left a deep impression: and to think of one so clever, so observant, so brilliant even, to have been shipwrecked in this way, indirectly through our doing! I must ask my dear pet to write me out something kind and sympathetic, which I can show to this poor waif and comfort him. That little heart has done the mischief, and she must make up a little, and I lay a husband's despotic commands on her. For I have set my heart on bringing this man back into the path of decency and order, and feel a conviction I *shall succeed*, if I could get but some power and influence over him. I say again, my pet must pray.

Sunday.—How strange is a Sunday in this place! There is an English church, a chaplain, and a regular round of duty; but I think there would be less affectation in ignoring altogether such religious machinery. It is at variance with the place, quite an anachronism. For even in the relations of religion to the state—I mean to the "administration" there used to enter something grotesque and curious. When the use of the Lutheran church was graciously conceded to English worshippers it was an article strictly insisted on, "that there should be no preaching against going to the Bank" — pleasant euphuism for gambling. This was a serious warning. Later on, as the church and chaplain had to be kept up by voluntary contributions and "a book," which was sent round to the visitors, the company found that this was telling a little indirectly on their interests. Testy fathers grew impatient at these applications: "infernal begging place," "have to pay my own man at home"—complaints which were, of course, nothing to the Bank. But when it was added, "I shall take care *not to come back* here again," it took another shape. Like the "refait" at their own game, it told, on the whole, against the player. So it was conveyed to the chaplain that in their zeal for the advancement of religion the administration would be happy to pay him his salary, and a handsome one too; the collecting by a book was scarcely dignified, &c. This tempting offer *had* to be declined, possibly with reluctance; but was a *little too* strong. The wages of preaching to be furnished by the wages of sin! By-and-by, too, it might have been required that a word or two should be delicately insinuated in favour of the harmlessness of the game.

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CHAPTER VI. BREAD SEEKING.

THERE are few streets in London better known to that large army of martyrs, the genteelly-poor, than those which run northward from the Strand, and are lost in the two vast tracts of brick known under the names of Covent-garden and Drury-lane. Lodging-house keepers do not affect these streets, preferring the narrow no-thoroughfares on the other side of the Strand, abutting on the river; streets eternally ringing with the hoarse voice of the costermonger, who descends on one side and ascends on the other; eternally echoing to the grinding of the organ-man, who gets through his entire répertoire twice over during his progress to the railing overlooking the mud-bank, and his return to the pickle-shop at the top; eternally haunted by the beer-boy and the newspaper-boy, by postmen infuriated with wrongly addressed letters, and by luggage-laden cabs. In the streets bearing northward no costermonger screams and no organ is found; the denizens are business-people, and would very soon put a stop to any such attempt. Business, and nothing but business, in that drab-coloured house with the high wire blinds in the window, over which you can just catch a glimpse of the top of a hanging white robe. Cope and Son are the owners of the drab-coloured house, and Cope and Son are the largest retailers of clerical millinery in London. All day long members of "the cloth," sleek, pale, emaciated, high church curates; stout, fresh-coloured, huge-whiskered, broad church rectors; fat, pasty-faced, straight-haired evangelical ministers, are pouring into Cope and Son's for clothes, for hoods, for surplices, for stoles, for every variety of ecclesiastical garment. Cope and Son supply all, in every variety, for every sect; the M.B. waistcoat and stiff-collared coat reaching to his heels in which the Honourable and Reverend Cyril Genuflex looks so imposing, as he, before the assembled vestry, defies the scrutiny of his evangelical churchwarden; the pepper-and-salt cutaway in which the Reverend Pytchley Quorn follows the hounds; the black stuff gown in which the Reverend Locock Congreve perspires and groans as he deals out denunciations of those sitting under him; and the purple bedgown, turned up with yellow satin, and worked all over with crosses and vagaries, in which poor Tom Phoole, such a kind-hearted and such a soft-headed vessel, goes through his ritualistic tricks—all these come from the establishment of Cope and Son's, in Rutland-street, Strand. The next house on the right is handy for the high church clergymen, though the evangelicals shut their eyes and turn away their heads as they pass by it. Here Herr Tubelkahn, from Elberfeld, the cunning worker in metals, the artificer of brass and steel and iron, and sometimes of gold and silver, the great ecclesiastical upholsterer, has set up his lares and penates, and here he deals in the loveliest of mediævalisms and the choicest of renaissance wares. The sleek long-coated gentry who come to make purchases can scarcely thread their way through the heterogeneous contents of Herr Tubelkahn's shop. All massed together without order; black oaken chairs, bought up by Tubelkahn's agents from occupants of tumbledown old cottages in midland districts; crosiers and crucifixes, ornate and plain, from Elberfeld; sceptres and wands from Solingen, lecterns in the

shape of enormous brazen eagles with outstretched wings from Birmingham, enormous candelabra and gaseliers of Gothic pattern from Liege, and sculptured pulpits and carved altar-rails from the Curtain-road, Shoreditch. Altar-cloths hang from the tables, and altar carpets, none of your common loom-woven stuff, but hand-worked and—as Herr Tubelkahn gives you to understand—by the fairest fingers are spread about to show their patterns to the best advantage; while there is so much stained glass about ready for immediate transfer to the oriel windows of country churches, that when the sun shines, Herr Tubelkahn's customers seem to be suddenly invested with Joseph's garment of many colours, and the whole shop lights up like a kaleidoscope.

Many of the customers both of Messrs. Cope and Tubelkahn were customers, or, more euphuistically, clients, of Messrs. Camoxon, who kept the celebrated Clerical and Educational Registry higher up the street; but these customers and clients invariably crossed and recrossed the road, in proceeding from the one to the other of these establishments, in order to avoid a certain door which lay midway between them. A shabby swing door sun-blistered, and with its bottom panel scored with heel and toe kicks from impatient entrance-seeking feet; a door flanked by two flaming bills, and surrounded by a host of close-shaven, sallow-faced men, in shabby clothes and shiny hats, and red noses, and swinging canes, noble Romans, roystering cavaliers, clamorous citizens, fashionable guests, virtuous peasants—all at a shilling a night; for the door was, in fact, the stage-door of the Cracksideum Theatre. The shabby men in threadbare jauntiness smiled furtively, and grinned at each other as they saw the sleek gentlemen in shining broadcloth step out of their path; but the said gentlemen felt the proximity of the Thespian temple very acutely, and did not scruple to say so to Messrs. Camoxon, who, as in duty bound, shrugged their shoulders deprecatingly, and—changed the conversation. They were very sorry, but—and they shrugged their shoulders! When men shrug their shoulders to their customers it's time that they should retire from business. It was time that the Messrs. Camoxon so retired, for the old gentleman now seldom appeared in Rutland-street, but remained at home at Wimbledon, enacting his favourite character of the British squire, and actually dressing the part in a blue coat and gilt buttons, grey knee-breeches, and Hessian boots; while young George Camoxon hunted with the queen's hounds, had dined twice at the Life Guards' mess at Windsor, and had serious thoughts of standing for the county. But the business was far too good to give up; every one who had a presentation or an advowson to sell took it to Camoxons'; the head clerk could tell you off-hand the net value of every valuable living in England, the age of the incumbent, and the state of his health, every rector who wanted assistance, every curate who wanted a change, in servants' phrase, "to better himself," every layman who wanted a title for orders, every vicar who, oddly enough, wanted to change a dull bleak living in the north for a pleasant social sphere of duty in a cheerful neighbourhood in the south of England; parents on the look-out for tutors, tutors in search of pupils—all inscribed their names on Camoxons' books, and looked to them for assistance in their extremity. There was a substantial, respectable, orthodox appearance about Camoxons', in the ground-glass windows, with the device of the Bible and Sceptre duly inscribed thereon; in the chaste internal fittings of polished mahogany and plain horsehair stools, with the Churchman's Almanack on the wall in mediæval type, very illegible, and in a highly mediæval frame, all bosses and clamps; in the big ledgers and address books, and in the Post-office Directory, which here shed its truculent red cover, and was scarcely recognisable in a meek sad-coloured calf binding; and, above all, in the grave, solemn, sable-clad clerks, who moved noiselessly about, and who looked like clergymen playing at business.

Up and down Rutland-street had Walter Joyce paced full a thousand times since his arrival in London. The name of the street and of its principal inhabitants were familiar to him, through the advertisements in the clerical newspaper which used to be sent to Mr. Ashurst at Helmingham; and no sooner was he settled down in his little lodging in Winchester-street, than he crossed the mighty artery of the Strand, and sought out the street and the shops of which he had already heard so much. He saw them, peered in at Copes' and at Tubelkahn's, and looked earnestly at Camoxons' ground-glass window, and half thought of going in to see whether they had anything which might suit him on their books. But he refrained until he had

received the answers to a certain advertisement which he had inserted in the newspapers, setting forth that a young man with excellent testimonials—he knew he could get them from the rector of Helmingham—was desirous of giving instruction in the classics and mathematics. Advertising, he thought, was a better and more gentlemanly medium than causing a detailed list of his accomplishments to be inscribed in the books of the Ecclesiastical Registry, as a horse's pedigree and performances are entered in the horsedealer's list; but when, after hunting for half an hour through the columns of the newspaper's supplement, he found his advertisement amongst a score of others, all of them from men with college honours, or promising greater advantages than he could hold forth, he began to doubt the wisdom of his proceeding. However, he would wait and see the result. He did so wait for three days, but not a single line addressed, as requested, to W. J. found its way to Winchester-street. Then he sent for the newspaper again, and began to reply to the advertisements which he thought might suit him. He had no high thoughts or hopes, no notions of regenerating the living generation, or of placing tuition on a new footing, or rendering it easy by some hitherto unexplained process. He had been an usher in a school, for the place of an usher in a school he had advertised, and if he could have obtained that position he would have been contented. But when the few answers to his advertisement arrived, he saw that it was impossible to accept any of the offers they contained. One man wanted him to teach French with a guaranteed Parisian accent, to devote his whole time out of school hours to the boys, to supervise them in the Indian sceptre athletic exercises, and to rule over a dormitory of thirteen, "where, in consequence of the lax supervision of the last didaskolos, severe measures would be required," for twenty pounds a year. Another gentleman, whose note-paper was ornamented with a highly florid Maltese cross, and who dated his letter "Eve of S. Boanerges," wished to know his opinion of the impostor-firebrand M. Luther, and whether he (the advertiser) had any connexions in the florist or decorative line, with whom an arrangement in the mutual accommodation way could be entered into; while a third, evidently a grave sententious man, with a keen eye to business, expressed, on old-fashioned Bath-post, gilt-edged letter paper, his desire to know "what sum W. J. would be willing to contribute for the permission to state, after a year's residence, that he had been one of Dr. Sumph's most trusted helpmates and assistants?"

No good to be got that way, then, and a visit to Camoxons' imminent, for the money was running very, very short, and the conventional upturning of stones must be proceeded with. Visit to Camoxons' paid, after much staring through the ground-glass windows (opaque generally, but transparent in the Bible and Sceptre artistic bits) much ascent and descent of two steps cogitatively, final rush up top step wildly, and hurried, not to say pantomimic, entrance through the ground-glass door, to be confronted by the oldest and most composed of the sable-clad clerks. Bows exchanged; name and address required; name and address given in a low and serious whisper, and repeated aloud in a clear high treble, each word, as it was uttered, being transcribed in a hand which was the very essence of copperplate into an enormous book. Position required? Second or third mastership in a classical school, private tutorship, as secretary or librarian to a nobleman or gentleman. So glibly ran the old gentleman's steel pen over these items that Walter Joyce began to fancy that applicants for one post were generally ready and willing to take all or any, as indeed they were. "Which university, what college?" The old gentleman scratched his head with the end of his steel-pen holder, and looked across at Walter, with a benevolent expression which seemed to convey that he would rather the young man would say Christchurch than St. Mary's, and Trinity in preference to Clare. Walter Joyce grew hot to his ear tips, and his tongue felt too large for his mouth, as he stammered out, "I have not been to either University—I——," but the remainder of the sentence was lost in the loud bang with which the old gentleman clapped to the heavy sides of the big book, clasped it with its brazen clasp, and hoisted it on to a shelf behind him with the dexterity of a juggler.

"My good young friend," said the old clerk, blandly; "you might have saved yourself a vast amount of vexation, and me a certain amount of trouble, if you had made that announcement earlier! Good morning!"

"But do you mean to say——"

"I mean to say that in that book at the

present moment are the names of sixty gentlemen seeking just the employment which you have named, all of whom are not merely members of colleges, but members who have taken rank, prizemen, first-class men, wranglers, senior optimes; they are on our books, and they may remain there for months before we get them off. You may judge, then, what chance you would have. At most agencies they would have taken your money and given you hope. But we don't do that here—it isn't our way—good morning!"

"Then you think I have no chance——"

"I'm sure of it—through us at least—good-morning!"

Joyce would have made another effort, but the old gentleman had already turned on his heel, and feigned to be busy with some letters on a desk before him, so Walter turned round too, and silently left the registry office.

Silently, and with an aching heart. The old clerk had said but little, but Walter felt that his dictum was correct, and that all hopes of getting a situation as a tutor were at an end. Oh, if his father had only left him money enough to go to college, he would have had a future before him which — but then, Marian? He would never have known that pure, faithful, earnest love, failing which, life in its brightest and best form would have been dull and distasteful to him. He had that love still, thank Heaven, and in that thought there were the elements of hope, and the promptings to bestir himself yet once more in his hard self-appointed task of bread-winning.

Money running very short, and time running rapidly on. Not the shortest step in advance since he had first set foot in London, and the bottom of his purse growing painfully visible. He had taken to frequenting a small coffee-house in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, where, as he munched the roll and drank the tea, which now too often served him as a dinner, he could read the newspapers and scan the advertisements to see if there were anything likely to suit him among the myriad columns. It was a quiet and secluded little place, where but few strangers entered—he saw the same faces night after night, as he noticed—and where he could have his letters addressed to him under his initials, which was a great comfort, as he had noticed lately that his landlady in his river-side lodging-house had demurred to the receipt of so much initialled correspondence, ascribing it, as Walter afterwards learned from the "slavey", or maid-of-all-work, either to "castin' orryscopes, tellin' charickters by 'andwritin', or rejen'rative bolsum for the 'air!"—things utterly at variance with the respectability of her establishment.

A quiet secluded little place, sand-floored and spittoon-decorated, with a cosy clock and a cosy red-faced fire, singing with steaming kettles, and cooking chops, and frizzling bacon; with a sleepy cat, a pet of the customers, dozing before the hearth, and taking occasional quarter-of-an-hour turns round the room, to be back-rubbed, and whisker-scratched, and tit-bit fed; with tea and coffee and cocoa, in thick blue China half-pint mugs, and with bacon of which the edge was by no means to be cut off and thrown away, but was thick, and crisp, and delicious as the rest of it, on willow-pattern plates; with little yellow pats of country butter, looking as if the cow whose impressed form they bore had only fed upon buttercups, as different from the ordinary petrified cold cream which in London passes current for butter as chalk from cheese. "Bliffkins's"—the house was supposed to have been leased to Bliffkins as the Elephant, and appeared under that title in the Directories; but no one knew it but as "Bliffkins's"—was a Somersetshire house, and kept a neat placard framed and glazed in its front window to the effect that the Somerset County Gazette was taken in. So that among the thin pale London folk who "used" the house you occasionally came upon stalwart giants, big-chested, horny-handed, deep-voiced, with z's sticking out all over their pronunciation, jolly Zummerzetshire men, who brought Bliffkins the latest gossip from his old native place of Bruton and its neighbourhood, and who, during their stay—and notably at cattle-show period—were kings of the house. At ordinary times, however, the frequenters of the house never varied—indeed it was understood that Bliffkins's was a "connexion," and did not in the least depend upon chance custom. Certain people sat in certain places, ordered certain refreshment, and went away at certain hours, never varying in the slightest particular. Mr. Byrne, a wizened old man, who invariably bore on his coat and on his hair traces of fur, and fluff, and wool, who was known to be a bird-stuffer by trade, and who was reputed to be an extreme radical in politics

and the writer of some of those spirit-stirring letters in the weekly press signed "Lucius Junius Brutus" and "Scrutator," sat in the right-hand corner box nearest the door, where he was out of the draught, and had the readiest chance of pouncing upon the boy who brought in the evening papers, and securing them before his rival, Mr. Wickwar, could effect a seizure. Mr. Wickwar, who was a retired tailor, and had plenty of means, the sole bane of his life being the danger to the constitution from the recklessly advanced feeling of the times, sat at the other end of the room, being gouty and immobile, contenting himself with glaring at his democratic enemy, and occasionally withering him with choice extracts from the Magna Charta weekly journal. The box between them was usually devoted of an evening to Messrs. O'Shane and Begson, gentlemen attached to the press, capital company, full of anecdote and repartee, though liable to be suddenly called away in the exigence of their literary pursuits. The top of the policeman's helmet or the flat cap of the fireman on duty just protruded through the swing-door in their direction, acted as tocsins to these indefatigable public servants, cut them off in the midst of a story, and sent them flying on the back of an engine, or at the tail of a crowd, to witness scenes which, pourtrayed by their graphic pencils, afforded an additional relish to the morning muffin at thousands of respectable breakfast-tables. Between these gentlemen and a Mr. Shimmer, a youngish man, with bright eyes, hectic colour, and a general sense of nervous irritation, there was a certain spirit of camaraderie which the other frequenters of Bliffkins's could not understand. Mr. Shimmer always sat alone, and during his meal invariably buried himself in one of the choice volumes of Bliffkins's library, consisting of old volumes of Blackwood's, Bentley's, and Tait's magazines, from which he would occasionally make extracts in a very small hand in a very small note-book. It was probably from the fact of a printer's boy having called at Bliffkins's with what was understood to be a "proof," that a rumour arose and was received throughout the Bliffkins connexion that Mr. Shimmer edited the Times newspaper. Be that as it might, there was no doubt, both from external circumstances and from the undefined deference paid to him by the other gentlemen of the press, that Mr. Shimmer was a literary man of position, and that Bliffkins held him in respect, and, what was more practical for him, gave him credit on that account. An ex-parish clerk, who took snuff and sleep in alternate pinches; a potato salesman in Covent Garden, who drank coffee to keep himself awake, and who went briskly off to business when the other customers dropped off wearily to bed; a marker at an adjoining bowling-alley, who would have been a pleasant fellow had it not been for his biceps, which got into his head and into his mouth, and pervaded his conversation; and a seedsman, a terrific republican, who named his innocent bulbs and hyacinths after the most sanguinary heroes of the French revolution, filled up the list of Bliffkins's "regulars."

Among these quiet people Walter Joyce took up his place night after night, until he began to be looked upon as of and belonging to them. They were intolerant of strangers at Bliffkins's, of strangers that is to say, who, tempted by the comforts of the place, renewed their visits, and threatened to make them habitual. These were for the most part received at about their third appearance, when they came in with a pleasant smile and thought they had made an impression, with a strong stare and a dead silence, under the influences of which they ordered refreshment which they did not want, had to pay for, and went away without eating, amid the contemptuous grins of the regulars. But Walter Joyce was so quiet and unobtrusive, so evidently a gentleman, desirous of peace and shelter and refuge at a cheap rate, that the great heart of Bliffkins' softened to him at once; they themselves had known the feelings under which he sought the asylum of that Long-acre Patmos, and they respected him. No one spoke to him, there was no acknowledgment of his presence among them; they knew well enough that any such manifestation would have been out of place; but when, after finishing his very simple evening meal, he would take a few sheets of paper from his pocket, draw to him the Times' supplement, and, constantly referring to it, commence writing a series of letters, they knew what all that portended, and all of them, including old Wickwar, the ex-tailor and great conservative, silently wished him godspeed.

Ah, those letters, dated from Bliffkins's coffee-house, and written in Walter Joyce's roundest hand, in reply to the hundred of chances which each day's newspaper sheet

offered to every enterprising bread-seeker, chances so promising at the first glance, so barren and so full of rottenness when they came to be tested! Clerkships? Clerkships galore! legal, mercantile, general clerks were wanted everywhere, only apply to A. B. or Y. Z., and take them! But when A. B. or Y. Z. replied, Walter Joyce found that the legal clerks must write the regular engrossing hand, must sweep out the office ready for the other clerks by nine A.M., and must remain there occasionally till nine P.M., with a little outdoor work in the service of writs and notices of ejectment. The duties required of the mercantile clerk were but little better, and those of the general clerks were worst of all, while throughout a net income of eighteen shillings a week appeared to be the average remuneration. "A secretary wanted." Certainly, four secretaries wanted nearly every day, for public companies which were about to bring forth an article in universal demand, but of which the supply had hitherto been limited, and which could not fail to meet with an enormous success and return a large dividend. In all cases the secretary must be a man of education and of gentlemanly manners, so said the advertisements; but the reply to Walter Joyce's application, said in addition that he must be able to advance the sum of three hundred pounds, to be invested in the shares of the company, which would bear interest at the rate of twenty-five per cent per annum. The Press? Through the medium of their London fraternity the provincial press was clamorous for educated men who could write leading articles, general articles and reviews; but on inquiry the press required the same educated men to be able to combine shorthand reporting with editorial writing, and in many cases suggested the advisability of the editorial writer being able to set up his own leaders in type at case. The literary institutions throughout the country were languishing for lecturers, but when Walter Joyce wrote to them, offering them a choice of certain subjects which he had studied, and on which he thought himself competent of conveying real information, he received answers from the secretaries, that only men of name were paid by the institutions, but that the committee would be happy to set apart a night for him if he chose to lecture gratis, or that if he felt inclined to address the inhabitants of Knuckleborough on his own account, the charge for the great hall was three pounds, for the smaller hall thirty shillings a night, in both cases exclusive of gas, while the secretary, who kept the principal stationer's shop and library in the town, would be happy to become his agent, and sell his tickets at the usual charge of ten per cent. Four pounds a week, guaranteed! Not a bad income for a penniless man; to be earned, too, in the discharge of a light and gentlemanly occupation, to be acquired by the outlay of three shillings' worth of postage stamps. Walter Joyce sent the postage stamps, and received in return a lithographic circular, very dirty about the folded edges, instructing him in the easiest method of modelling wax flowers!

That was the final straw. On the receipt of that letter, and on the reading of it—he had taken it from the stately old looking-glass over the fire-place to the box where of late he usually sat—Walter Joyce gave a deep groan, and buried his face in his hands. A minute after he felt his hair slightly touched, and looking up saw old Jack Byrne bending over him.

"What ails ye, lad?" asked the old man, tenderly.

"Misery—despair—starvation!"

"I thought so!" said the old man calmly. Then taking a small battered flask from his breast and emptying its contents into a clean cup before him—"Here, drink this, and come outside. We can't talk here!"

Walter swallowed the contents of the cup, mechanically, and followed his new friend into the street.

A HIDDEN WITNESS.

"SHE is positively starving, and this money will be the saving of her."

These words were spoken in the course of a conversation between my old friend Mr. John Irwin, retired civil-servant, and myself; both sitting on a fine September morning in a little summer-house, in the garden of our mutual friend the Rev. Henry Tyson, Rector of Northwick-Balham, in the county of Berkshire. The subject of our conversation had been a piece of very flagitious behaviour on the part of a wealthy retired tradesman, Harding by name, who lived in the neighbourhood. A sum of money, amounting to a hundred pounds, was owing by this man to a widow, living also close at hand, for work done by her husband, just before he died. The validity of the claim had been denied by Mr. Harding, and payment obstinately refused.

"I have made it all right, however," said my friend, with something approaching to a chuckle. "It happens that this Harding is to a certain extent in my power. The particulars of a transaction in which he was engaged some

years ago, not of the most creditable nature, and all the facts relating to which came before me in the course of my official career, are not only perfectly well known to me, but he knows that I know of them, and is aware that I could even at this day use them against him if I chose. Consequently he is always exceedingly civil to me, and when, in the course of a conversation between us yesterday, I explained to him—assuming as I did so a dangerous look, which I could see had its effect—that I should take it exceedingly ill if he did not at once consider this poor woman's claim, and forthwith pay her what he had owed to her husband, he turned very pale, and informed me that since a person on whose judgment he could so entirely rely as he could on mine, was of opinion, after duly considering the claim, that it was a just one, he would at once give up his own view of the case, which had certainly hitherto been opposed to mine, and would without delay discharge the liability. He only begged that he might be spared the annoyance of a personal interview with his creditor, and that I would undertake in my own person to see the widow and transact the business part of the arrangement myself.

"You know," continued Mr. Irwin, "how interested I have always been in this poor soul's case, and you will believe how readily I undertook the charge. This very afternoon the business is to be brought to a conclusion. I have arranged to call on Harding (who as you know lives close by) at three o'clock, to get the money, and I will then convey it with my own hands to the poor woman as a surprise."

"You have never done a better day's work," I said. "How do you mean to go?"

"I shall walk. It is not above a couple of miles. The path across the fields by Gorfield Copse is the nearest way, isn't it?"

"Yes, by a good deal," I answered. "Would you like a companion?"

"Well, I should like one, certainly," was my friend's answer, "but I feel a little delicacy about introducing a stranger into the business—either that with Mr. Harding himself, or with my friend the widow, who is the proudest and most sensitive woman in the world."

I assented to the justice of this objection, and having some letters to write, got up to go, leaving my friend sitting in the summer-house. As I quitted it, turning sharply round to go into the house, I came suddenly upon a man who was emerging from among the shrubs which formed the back of the little arbour.

He was an occasional helper about the place, and I had noticed him more than once, and not with favour. He was a very peculiar, and, as I thought, a very ill-looking man. He was a shy, slouching sort of creature, who always started and got out of the way when you met him. A man with hollow sunken eyes, a small mean pinched sort of nose, and a prominent savage-looking under jaw, with teeth like tusks, which his beard did not always conceal. This beard, by-the-by, was one of the most marked characteristics of the man's appearance, it being—as was his hair also—of that flaming red colour which is not very often seen—really red, with no pretensions to those auburn, or chesnut, or golden tints which have become fashionable of late years. The blazing effect of this man's colouring was increased very much by the head-dress he wore: an old cricketing cap of brightest scarlet. He was otherwise dressed in one of those short white canvas shirts or frocks which are much worn by engineers, stokers, and plasterers, over their ordinary clothes. There was a great brown patch of new material let into the front of this garment which showed very conspicuously, even at a distance. His lower extremities were clad in common velveteen trousers, old and worn.

Such was the man who appeared suddenly in my path as I left the summer-house, and who disappeared as suddenly out of it a moment after our encounter, gliding stealthily off in the direction of the kitchen garden.

I saw my good friend Mr. Irwin once more before he started on his beneficent errand. He was in high spirits, and had got himself up in great style for the occasion, with a light-coloured summer over-coat, to keep off the dust, and a white hat. I think he had a flower in his button-hole.

There was one part of Mr. Irwin's equipment a little out of the common way, and this was a butterfly net fixed to the end of a stick. My friend was a most enthusiastic entomologist, and when in the country never stirred without carrying with him this means of securing his favourite specimens. I joked him a little on the introduction of this unusual element into a business transaction, suggesting that Mr. Harding would think that he had brought it as a receptacle for the widow's money. "I must have it with me," said the old gentleman, "for if I ever venture to go out without it I invariably meet with some invaluable specimen which escapes me in a heart-rending manner. But," he added, "I'm not going to let Harding discover my weakness, you may be sure. I'll leave it outside among the bushes, and recover it when the interview is over."

"Well, good luck attend you any way," I called after him, "a successful end to your negotiations, and plenty of butterflies."

The good-hearted old fellow gave me a nod and a smile, and, flourishing his net, was presently off on his mission.

I had what we familiarly call "the fidgets" that afternoon. I could not settle down to anything. Having tried wandering about the garden, I now took, in turn, to wandering about the house, going first into one room and then into another, looking at the pictures, taking up different objects which lay about, and examining them in an entirely purposeless way.

At the top of my friend's house there was a little room in a tower, which was used as a smoking-room, and also as a kind of observatory: my host being in the habit of observing the heavenly bodies through his telescope when favourable occasion offered. I remembered the existence of this apartment now, and

feeling that a small dose of tobacco would suit my present condition very well, determined to climb the turret staircase, and enjoy a quiet smoke in the observatory.

The room was charming. There were large windows in it, and the view was most extensive, taking in scenery of a very varied kind—hill and dale, wood, river, and plain. The signs of habitation were not numerous, the country being but thinly populated: still there were cottages and farmhouses scattered here and there, and even one or two villages in the distance. I lighted my cigar and gave myself up to tranquil enjoyment of the scene before me.

As I sat thus, the clock of my host's church struck three. Remembering that to be the hour of Mr. Irwin's interview with Harding, my thoughts reverted to the subject of the widow's debt, and to the good-nature which my old friend had displayed in giving himself so much trouble and undertaking such a thankless office. My mind did not dwell long on these things, however. I happened to catch sight of the telescope, which was put away in a corner of the room; and being restless, and not in a mood in which total inaction was agreeable to me, I determined to have it out and examine the details of the landscape which I had just been studying on a large scale.

The day was very favourable for my purpose. The sun was shining and there was an east wind: a combination which often produces a remarkable clearness in the atmosphere. Circumstances could not possibly be more suitable for telescopic operations, so placing the instrument on its stand before one of the open windows, I sat down and commenced my survey.

It was a superb telescope, and although I knew it well, and had often used it before, I found myself still astonished at its power and range. I set myself to trying experiments as to the extent of its capacity, taking the time by the church clock of a village two miles off, trying to make out what people were doing in the extreme distance, and in other ways putting the capabilities of the instrument to the test. That done, with results of the most satisfactory kind, I went to work in a more leisurely fashion, shifting the glass from point to point of the landscape, as the fancy took me, and enjoying the delicious little circular pictures, which, in endless variety, seemed to fit themselves, one after another, into the end of the instrument. The little round pictures were some of them very pretty. Here was one—the first the telescope showed me—in the front of which was a small patch of purple earth just brought under the plough. A little copse bounded one side of this arable land; there was a very bright green field in the distance; and in the foreground the plough itself was crawling slowly along, drawn by a couple of ponderous and sturdy horses, a bay and a white, whose course was directed by an old man with a blue neckerchief, the ends hanging loose, a boy being in attendance to turn the horses at the end of each furrow, and generally to keep them up to their work.

A turn of the glass, and another picture takes its place. A road-side ale-house now. One of the upper windows has a muslin half blind betokening the guest chamber, another on the ground floor is ornamented with a red curtain—the tap-room, this, where convivial spirits congregate on Saturday nights. The inn has a painted sign; somebody in a scarlet coat and with something on his head which I can't quite make out; perhaps it is a three-cornered hat, and perhaps the inn is dedicated to the inevitable Marquis of Granby. Stay! I recollect now seeing such an inn in one of my walks in the neighbourhood. It *is* the Marquis of Granby, as I well remember. An empty cart is standing in front of the house, the driver watering his horses, and beering himself, just before the house door, where I can see him plainly

Another and a more extensive turn, and the little railway station comes within the limits of the magic circle. Not much to interest here: a small whitewashed, slate-roofed, formal building, hard, and angular, and hideous. A lot of sacks piled up against the wall, waiting to be sent off by the luggage train, a great signal post rising into the air, a row of telegraphic poles stretching away in perspective.

Now a prosperous farmstead, with a big thatched house, where the farmer and his family reside, with well-preserved sheds and outhouses: there is a straw-yard, too, with cattle standing knee-deep, and eating out of racks well found in hay; and there are pigs wallowing in the mire, and there are cocks and hens jerking themselves hither and thither, and pecking, and generally fussing, as their manner is. This picture in its circular frame pleases me well, and so does the next. A gentleman's seat of the entirely comfortable, not of the showy and ostentatious, sort. The grounds are large enough to be called a park, and the house lying rather low, as it was the fashion to build a century or two ago, stands in the midst of them, with a trim and pleasantly formal flower-garden round about it. It is a red brick house of the Hanoverian time, with a rather high slate (green slate) roof, with dormer windows in it. The other windows have white sashes which are flush with the wall, and not, as in these days, sunk in a recess.

I look long on this scene, and then, not without reluctance, shift my glass, and turning away from human habitations, begin to examine the more retired and unfrequented parts of the landscape. The magic circle now encloses nothing but trees and meadows, and little quiet nooks and corners, where the lazy cows stand about in shady places too idle even to feed, or where the crows blacken the very ground by their numbers, unmolested by shouting boys, unscared by even the old traditional hat and coat upon a stick. I come presently to a little bright green paddock, with a pony feeding in it—a refreshing little round picture pleasant to dwell on. There is a pond in one corner of the

paddock, surrounded with pollard willows: the water reflecting them upon its surface, as also a little patch of sky which it gets sight of somehow, between the branches. It is a comfortable and innocent little place this, with a small wood close by, with a haystack near the gate, and stay—what is this? There are figures here—two men—how plainly I see them! But what are they doing? They are in violent movement. Are they fighting, wrestling, struggling? It is so. A struggle is going on between them, and one of the two—he wears a bright red cap—has the best of it. He has his antagonist, who seems to be weak and makes but faint resistance, by the throat; he strikes fiercely at the wretched man's head with a thick stick or club he holds, and pressing on him sorely, beats him fiercely to the ground. The man who has the best of it—there is something more of red about him besides his cap; is it his beard?—does not spare the fallen man, but beats him still about the head—a gray head surely—with his club. Horrible sight to look on. I would give anything to tear myself away from the telescope or at least to close my eyes, and shut out the sickening spectacle. But the butchery is nearly over. The gray-haired man continues yet to struggle and resist, but only for a little while. In a very short time the contest, as I plainly see, will be over. The conquered man, making one more supreme effort, rises nearly to his feet, receives another crushing blow, falls suddenly to the ground, and is still. Merciful Heaven! what is this! Who are these two men? Do I know them? It cannot be that that is my dear old friend lying helpless on the ground, and that the other is the man whom I took note of, just now, in the rectory garden. It cannot be that this deed, of which I have been a witness—inactive, powerless to help or save—is a MURDER!

I felt for a moment as if all presence of mind, and power of action, had deserted me. What was I to do? That was all that I could say, over and over again, as I sat still gazing through the telescope with an instinctive feeling that I must not lose one single incident of the scene before me. All that happened I must see. I recalled my senses by a mighty effort, and reasoned as men do in a crisis. What was to be done? The place where this horrible deed was being committed was so far off—about three quarters of a mile as the crow flies, more than a mile by any road I knew of—that there could be no possibility of my getting there in time to be of the slightest use. The end, if it had not come already—and I felt certain that it had—must most surely have come before I could traverse that distance. There was but one way now in which I could be of any service, and that was in securing the detection of the murderer. I must remain at my post and watch his every movement, besides endeavouring to render myself certain, so far as the glass would enable me to be so, concerning his appearance and dress. So there I sat, helpless and spell-bound, but watching with devouring eyes. There was a sudden stillness where there had been before so much of struggling and movement. The blows had ceased to fall now. The deed was accomplished, and there was no more need for them. The man himself, the murderer, was still, and I made sure of his identity. There was the red hair, there was the red beard, there was the scarlet cap lying on the ground, there was the canvas frock with the patch in front. There was no doubt. Alas! was there any doubt either about that other figure lying on the grass beside him? The light-coloured summer coat which he had worn when I last saw him, the white hairs. It was nearly too much to bear, but a savage craving for vengeance came to my aid, and braced up my energies I dispelled by an effort of the will a dimness which came before my eyes, and straining them more intensely than ever, saw the man with the red cap start up, as if suddenly conscious that he was losing time, and set himself to work to rifle the body of his victim. As far as I could see, he was engaged in emptying the poor old man's pockets, and once I thought I saw the gleam of something golden; but this might have been fancy. At all events he continued for some time to turn the body over and over, and then, having, I suppose, satisfied himself with what he had secured, he got up, and dragging the corpse after him, made his way to the little wood close by, and entering it, disappeared from sight. And now, indeed, a crisis had arrived when it was difficult in the extreme to know how to act. What if that disappearance were final? What if he should get out of the wood at the further extremity and I should see him no more?

It was a breathless moment. I continued to watch, and hardly breathed. At last, and when I was becoming desperate with uncertainty, I saw something move again. The trees were parted, and at the same place where the murderer had entered the wood, bearing with him the body of my old friend, he now reappeared, alone. He stood a moment as if undecided, and then came out, looking behind him first, and then arranging the disturbed boughs as though to make the place look as if no one had passed that way. That done, he stood still for a moment, looking about him as if in search of something, and then he moved across — how unconscious of the pursuer on his track, the telescope following his every step, unseen and unsuspected! — to where at the corner of the meadow there was, as I have mentioned, a little pond with pollard willows round about its margin. He stooped and took up some object lying beside the pond. What was it? There was something green about it. Was it old Mr. Irwin's butterfly net? I could not see with certainty, but no doubt it was, and no doubt the poor old gentleman had wandered away from the footpath, which was near at hand, in pursuit of some entomological specimen.

The man with the red cap threw this object into the water. Then taking off his canvas frock, he began to wash the front of it, stained

no doubt with blood. Then he washed his hands and face, and putting on the frock, wet as it was in part, stood up and once more looked suspiciously about. All this took time, but I dared not remove my eye from the glass for a single instant. Once I had tried to reach the bell-handle, but I could not. Something would, however, have to be done presently, and done on the instant.

For he was going. He turned his back upon the pond; looked about, as if to see whether there were any traces of his crime visible; then crossed the field, got over the gate by the haystack, was lost to sight for a moment, appeared again, disappeared again, and finally, after being out of sight for some time, showed at last, walking along the high road, until he came to a road-side inn, that very Marquis of Granby spoken of above, into which he entered.

And now, indeed, I felt that the time had come when some decisive step must be taken. If he were not secured now, while he was in the public-house—if he got out of it without being taken—he might get off by ways which were hidden from my range of vision, and so escape. I still dared not move my eye from the telescope or the telescope from the inn-door. It was absolutely indispensable that he should not be able to leave the house without my knowing it. I must not stir then; but as something required to be done instantly, somebody else must stir for me. In a moment I decided on my course. Remaining motionless at my post, I lifted up my voice, and gave utterance to such a succession of shouts that I confidently expected that the whole establishment would rush up-stairs to the observatory, thinking that I myself was being murdered. It was not so, however, and considering the noise I made, it seemed really astonishing how long I called in vain. At last it did appear that I was heard. The head gardener was in the grounds close by, and the sound of my voice reached him at length through the open window. Even when he heard, however, it was evident that he could not make out whence the cries which reached him came. "Who calls?" he cried. "Here," I shouted. "In the tower. Help, help at once! There is not a moment to lose." And very soon I heard the welcome sound of footsteps hurrying up the turret stairs. Almost before the door was opened, or the gardener in the room, I issued my orders. "Jump upon the pony," I cried, still with my glass fixed on the door of the old inn, "and gallop at full speed down to the Marquis of Granby. There has been a murder committed, and the murderer is in that house. He has on a scarlet cap, has red hair and a red beard, and a canvas frock, with a dark patch in front."

"What! My helper here?" cried the gardener.

"The same. Seize him, or, if he has left when you get there, raise the hue and cry, and follow him. He has murdered poor old Mr. Irwin. Don't stop to answer," I added, as the man uttered an exclamation of surprise and horror. "Go—go at once. I dare not leave this post. Go, and if you meet any one on your way send him—her—any one—to me."

The man was a sharp fellow, and disappeared instantly. Very soon I had the satisfaction of hearing the sound of a horse's hoofs galloping out of the yard at the back. Meanwhile, half the household, alarmed by what the man had told them, had rushed up to the observatory, and were now gathered round me as I sat at the telescope. They were silent for a time, and I could feel, though my eyes were engaged, that they were watching me intently.

"What is his name?" I asked, after a while.

"His name is Mason," somebody replied: "William Mason." Then there was silence again as I went on watching.

"For God's sake, what is it, sir?" cried the old housekeeper, suddenly, in answer, I suppose, to an involuntary exclamation of mine.

"The door has opened," I answered.

"Is he coming out?"

No one appeared for a moment; at last some one passed out. It was not he, however—it was an old woman carrying a bundle.

There were several false alarms of this kind, as different people who had been taking refreshment at the tap came out, one after another, in pretty rapid succession. At last, after a longer interval than usual, the door opened quickly once again.

"It is he," I said, hardly knowing—till I heard the confused murmur of an exclamation from the group behind me—that I spoke. "He has come out. He is looking first one way and then another, and now he is gone, and the gardener will be too late!"

I could still see him, and could make out in which direction he was going.

"Is any one belonging to the stable here?"

"Yes, sir," replied a voice I knew.

"Get a horse saddled at once, Matthew, and bring him round. The swiftest you have in."

In a moment I heard the man's footsteps clattering down the stairs.

"Can you see him still?" asked the old housekeeper.

"At present I can, but I shall not be able to do so long. The part of the road he is approaching is hidden from my view."

Very soon my prediction came true. There was a turn in the road. Trees and buildings and rising ground intervened and hid the figure. It did not show again for a long space: when it did it came out by the railway station.

I sat and thought the situation over, and the conviction forced itself upon me, more and more strongly, that this railway station would be the ultimate destination of the murderer, and that the only chance now was to keep a steady watch upon its approaches. But my eyes, especially the left eye, which I had to keep closed, were now so tired that I could hardly use them. I found it, however, by no means easy to get a substitute.

There were only present at this time the women servants and a boy. The boy could not be trusted, of course, and the women, one and all, proclaimed, as they seated themselves

by turns before the glass, that they could only see "something dark bobbing up and down at the end of it." At last it was suggested that Martin, the vicar's factotum, who had been out, must be at home by this time, and a servant being despatched in search of him, he presently appeared and took my place at the glass: through which he could see perfectly.

"He lives just there, sir, between the part of the road where you say he disappeared and the station," said Martin, when he had heard all the foregoing particulars. "Just behind that row of poplars you see down yonder."

This opened a new view of the matter. Martin suggested that perhaps he had gone home, and that the right course might be to send there to capture him. The propriety of this, however, I doubted.

"Keep your attention fixed upon the station," I said, "and let me be informed of all that goes on there. He will find his way there at last."

Martin kept his glass fixed on the little building in silence. Everything appeared to be at a standstill for the moment.

"An old woman carrying a basket is making her way slowly to the station," said Martin; "one or two other people are beginning to arrive."

"What sort of people?"

"Oh, not our man. One is a lad, looks like a gentleman's groom, come to fetch some parcel. The other is a miller with a sack of meal. There are signs of some stir about the place, and I can make out the porters moving about. What time is it, sir?" asked the man, suddenly.

"Twenty minutes past four," I answered.

"The down train is due at 4.29," said Martin. "That accounts for the bustle."

"Where does it go to?" I asked.

"It's the Bristol train, sir," was the answer.

Just the place where, I thought, the murderer would want to go.

"There's a cart driven by an old man with a great many parcels, which the porters are removing, and taking into the station; there's a man with a couple of pointers coupled. The train's coming, sir, I can see the smoke, and they're working the signals as hard as they can go. Here's a carriage driving up with a pair of white horses. It's the Westbrook carriage—I can see the liveries. There's Squire Westbrook getting out, and there are the two young ladies. Here's the postman with his leather bag. Here's a woman with a little boy; the train's in now, and they're just going to shut the doors. Here comes somebody running. He's a volunteer, one of our own corps. He'll be too late. No; the porter sees him, and beckons him to make haste. The volunteer runs harder than ever, the porter drags him into the station and the door is shut."

"Is there nobody else?" I asked, in violent excitement.

"Not a soul, sir, and now the train is off."

"And are you sure you've not missed any one?"

"Quite sure, sir."

I was profoundly disappointed, and for the moment puzzled how to act. Watching the station was, for the present, useless. There would not be another train until eight o'clock at night. The only chance under these circumstances seemed to be the chance of finding the man at his own house. Thither I determined to go, thinking that even if he were not there I might obtain some information from the neighbours which might prove of use. I got a description of the house and its situation from Martin, and, leaving him with directions still to keep a watch on the station, ran down-stairs, and finding the horse I had ordered waiting for me at the door, went off at full speed.

The horse carried me so well that in a very short time I had reached the little clump of cottages to which I had been directed, and one of which was the dwelling-place of the murderer. I dismounted, and throwing my horse's bridle on the palings in front of the cottage, passed along the little path which led to the door, and proceeded to try the latch. The door was locked. Looking up at the windows—there were but two—I saw that they also were firmly secured, and that the blinds were down. The small abode had a deserted look, and I felt that it was empty; but I knocked loudly, nevertheless, and shook the door.

The noise of my arrival, and of my knocking, at length disturbed some of the neighbours, and one or two of them appeared.

"Is this William Mason's house?" I asked, addressing one of them: an old man, who looked tolerably intelligent, but wasn't.

"Yes, sir. But he's not there now. He's gone out," the man replied, after a minute or two devoted to thought.

"Gone out? How long ago?"

"Well," replied the man, after more time spent in reflection, "I should think it was about half an hour."

"Which way did he go?"

The old man took more time than ever to consider this question, driving me almost wild with his delay. Then, after looking first one way and then the other, he pointed in the direction of the station. I was already on horseback again, and just about to move off, when another of the neighbours interposed.

"I do think," said this one, speaking, if possible, more deliberately than the other, "that he went to his drill."

"Drill!" I cried. "What drill?"

"Why, volunteer drill, to be sure."

"What!" I screamed. "Was he a volunteer?"

"Yes, sir. The parson he requires everybody in his employment——"

I did not wait for more, but galloped off, as fast as my horse could go, to the railway station. I saw it all now. In the interval during which we had lost sight of the man he had been home, and, thinking that a change of costume might baffle pursuit, had assumed the volunteer dress as the best disguise at his disposal.

"Does any one here remember a man, in a volunteer uniform, who went off just now by the down train?" This was my inquiry, addressed to the first person I met at the station—a porter, who referred me to the station clerk, to whom I put the same question. This man answered in the affirmative at once. His attention had been particularly directed to this volunteer, by his having required change for a five-pound note, at the last moment, as the train was going to start.

"For what place did he take his ticket?"

"Bristol."

"That man is a murderer," I said, "and must be arrested. If you telegraph at once to Bath, the message will be there long before the train, and he can be stopped."

And so this terrible experience—the particulars of which I have related just as they occurred—came to an end. The murderer was arrested at Bath, and on his being searched the hundred pounds—except the small sum which he had expended on his railway ticket—were found upon him. The evidence against him was in all points overwhelming. The body of poor Mr. Irwin was discovered in the little wood. I myself directed the search. When it was concluded I wandered away to the willow pond to look for the butterfly-net. One end of the stick was visible above the water, the other end being sunk by the weight of the metal ring which was attached to it.

There was no link wanting in the mass of proof. The evidence, which it was my part to give on the trial, was irresistible. Great attempts were made to shake it, to prove that I might easily have made a mistake of identity; and that such details as I had described could not have been visible through the telescope at such a distance. Opticians were consulted; experiments were made. It was distinctly proved that it was really possible for me to have seen all that I stated I had seen; and though there was much discussion raised about the case, and though some of the newspapers took it up, and urged that men's lives were not to be sacrificed to the whims of "an idle gentleman who chose to spend his afternoons in looking out of window through a spy-glass," the jury returned a verdict against the prisoner, and William Mason was convicted and hanged.

The reader may, perhaps, be sufficiently interested in the facts of this case to be glad to hear that the poor woman, who was the innocent cause of the commission of this ghastly crime, did get her hundred pounds after all, though not from the hands of Mr. James Irwin.

THE ETERNAL PENDULUM.

Swing on, old pendulum of the world,
For ever and for ever,
Keeping the time of suns and stars,
The march that endeth never.
Your monotone speaks joy and grief,
And failure and endeavour,
Swing on, old pendulum, to and fro,
For ever and for ever!

Long as you swing shall earth be glad,
And men be partly good and bad,
And in each hour that passes by,
A thousand souls be born and die;
Die from the earth, to live we trust,
Unshackled, unallied with dust.
Long as you swing shall wrong come right,
As sure as morning follows night;
The days go wrong—the ages never—
Swing on, old pendulum—swing for ever!

THE MERCHANT'S HANAPER.

"You have often wondered why I did not marry Ashley Graham when I told you that he asked me," Rose Mantell said to me one evening, as we sat by the open window looking out on the moonlight quivering over the lake, and silvering the old mountains like a fine hoar frost spread over them; "and now you want to know why I am going to America, where I have no friends—at least, none you know of. Well, I have always put you off when you have questioned me, but to-night I will make a clean breast of it, as people say, and tell you my whole story."

You remember when we lived in Percy-street, my brother James and I? and you remember how poor we were, and what a miserable thing we made of it together, he with his painting and I with my music? We did not hide things from you as we did from others, but let you into the mysteries of our numerous makeshifts and contrivances, and how we managed to exist on what others would have starved on. And you remember how proud and sensitive James was? and how, with his wretched income—so hardly earned, too, poor fellow!—he was determined to keep up appearances, and never let the world know how poor he was? It was hard work, I can assure you; and the heavy end of the stick fell to me; the heavy end of this kind of stick always does fall to the woman; for, as the housekeeper, I had to make the best of things and to feel the worst, to pull the two gaping ends together as well as I could and to put myself in the gap when I could not.

Of course you remember Ashley Graham, my brother's great friend? They had been students together at the Academy; and once or twice in old days James had been down to the Lakes where Ashley lived; and in his humble modest way, dear fellow, looked up to his friend as to a superior being infinitely beyond him in everything. Certainly Ashley's family was better than ours; and, though they were all ruined

now, his early bringing up had been more luxurious and refined than ours had been; so that he in a manner condescended when he came into our home sphere, and he made me understand that he condescended. You know how men can make women understand this. With James of course Ashley was all that was genial and brotherly, though there was that certain flavour of the superior being in all he said or did; but he treated me very much as if I was an upper servant or an automaton. He never spoke to me; never even shook hands with me when he came in or went away; if he had anything to ask, anything he wanted done for him, he looked at James and asked him, though I had to do it; and if by any chance he came when James was out, and waited for him, he used to take a book and busy himself in that, without paying more attention to me than he did to the cat. And not quite so much. So this was how I knew that Ashley Graham held himself superior to us. He was too honourable to treat me as his equal when he knew that I was his inferior, I used to think; and I liked him all the better for his haughtiness.

Ashley knew very little about our real circumstances, and we hid the seamy side from him, perhaps foolishly. For instance, he did not know that we had only two rooms; that behind the large old Indian screen of our sitting-room was James's bed; and that the other little room at the top of the house was mine. He was as poor as we were, but he was in society and we were not; and that gave him an appearance of superior condition, which of course he wanted to keep up for the sake of his family. Still, he knew that James did not sell many pictures, and, as I tell you, we were all half-starved together. But Ashley thought we were better off than we were, and only I knew how poor he was.

He was often in our rooms, and lately he got into the way of sleeping there. The first time he asked for a bed it was a wild wet winter's night, when no one with a heart could have turned out even a dog. In those days he lived over at Holloway, or some unearthly place like that; it was past twelve, and the last omnibus had gone; a cab would have ruined him outright—a cab from Percy-street to Holloway for a poor painter who did not sell his pictures, the thing was impossible!—so when he asked, in that off-hand cavalier way of his, if we could take him in, and James looked at me, I answered briskly, "Yes, certainly;" and, with a sign to James, "if Mr. Graham does not object to a little room at the top of the house."

No, Mr. Graham did not object to a little room at the top of the house: he said this quite graciously, as if he was conferring a favour, not receiving it; upon which I went up-stairs, and began to arrange my own room for him. It was a pleasure! Georgie! I was just a slave, and nothing more! I brought out my poor little hoard of meagre prettinesses, and laid them about the room where they made the most effect; I hid away my own things, so that he should not know whose room it was; and when my brother took him up-stairs, even he scarcely seemed to know what I had done, and I really believe imagined I had somehow changed my room, and that I was to be quite comfortable myself for the night. He did not see me again to ask me how I had managed—I am speaking now of James—and neither he nor Ashley knew that I had passed the night sitting on a wooden chair by the empty kitchen hearth; for the landlady let us have a little kitchen for my cooking and washing, &c. It had been originally the scullery, and was a dirty, damp old hole; but it did well enough. We were too poor to be fastidious.

In the morning I took up Ashley's hot water and his boots, which I had cleaned with my own hands. He thought it was the landlady's servant who had waited on him, and as he passed me on the stairs he gave her sixpence, which the girl took quite tranquilly, as even less than her due. Those boots let me into the secret of Ashley's poverty. They were old and worn, and I mended them for him, I must say, cleverly. I often did this; for Ashley, never dreaming that I had only a hard wooden chair for my bed when he slept with us, continually now overstayed his time, playing chess or "talking shop" with my brother, and at last got to ask for his room as almost a matter of course. James was too proud and timid, poor fellow! to tell the truth, and I was too happy to be of use to Ashley to murmur at any sacrifice that I could make. It was the sweetest time of my life! That humble unrecognised self-sacrifice for the one you honour is almost more delicious than gratitude!

And all this time Ashley took no more notice of me than before. I was very young. James was only a protection in name, not in reality; and, girl as I was, I could understand something of the motive of his reserve, and see into the value of it. And yet I used to think he might have been just a little

more cognisant of my existence! He need not have made love to me, or been *very* attentive, but just a little—as I used to say, just as much as to the cat!

One day Ashley came to us in a terrible state. Even James saw that something had happened, and I, studying his every mood and expression as I did, knew at once that some distress was in the background. And it was something so new to see Ashley moved—so strong and almost hard as he was—that one felt it more in him than if it had been any other man. At least I did.

"James, my good fellow!" he said, in an excited way, "lend me five pounds, can you? My mother is dangerously ill, and they have written for me to go to her to-night. I happen not to have as much money about me at this moment, and I cannot get any from old Campbell until I have finished my work. He as good as bought my Herodias Dancing yesterday, but still you know it was not done out and out, so I could not very well ask him for the money, could I?"

Poor Ashley! His Herodias Dancing—one of the most hideous things you ever saw—was no more sold to old Campbell than I was! If Ashley could have got into the hands of any picture-dealer whatsoever he would have considered his fortune made. James blushed and hesitated. Five pounds! Ashley might as well have asked him for five hundred. We had not five shillings in the house; for we had had a bad week, and I was thinking somewhat ruefully of the short commons we should have to go upon, and how we were to get fed at all for the next ten days or so; and now Ashley was in trouble too, and wanted us to help him. James looked at me in great embarrassment. One by one we had parted with all our little valuables, but I had kept back one, a very handsome pearl ring of my dear mother's, which our father had given her on her wedding day. This was emphatically the last of our treasures, and I had struggled hard and made many sacrifices to keep it.

When James looked at me so wistfully, and when I thought of Ashley's trouble—his mother perhaps dying, and he her only son, and so fond of her!—I could not help crying; but I could not hesitate. What had been sacred to me for my mother's sake should be given to him for his. There was no sacrilege in this; it was a righteous disposition of a sacred treasure.

"I will get the money from the bank, James," I said.

And Ashley, though he stared, was taken in by the quiet matter-of-fact way in which I spoke. A poor artist in Percy-street, and a banker? Well! it was a kind of miracle, if true; but then there are miracles yet afloat. So I went out and pawned my ring, and came back with the money to Ashley. And of the two, James was decidedly the more astonished. Ashley took the money, said carelessly to me, "I am sorry you have had so much trouble, Miss Mantell," and thanked James very warmly. When he went away I ran up-stairs, and flinging myself on the bed sobbed bitterly. This precious ring—my last possession — and James thanked for lending out of a superfluous balance what I had procured by the sacrifice of my best treasure! It was a little hard; don't you think so, too, Georgie? But I did not let my brother see what I felt; and James, as you know, was one of those dear good creatures who never see anything they are not absolutely told or shown.

But I was half afraid that I had opened the door to a good deal of discomfort in the future; for Ashley would be sure to do about money as he had done about the bedroom, taking for granted that he could have whatever he asked for, and that James could help him with money—from that balance at his banker's—as he could help him with a room from his liberal arrangement of lodging. Not that he was selfish; you must not think that; but he was thoughtless. Was he not an artist? and could he, therefore, be anything but thoughtless? Besides, he did not know the kind of reverential feeling that both James and I had for him, and how we would have rather sacrificed ourselves than see him want anything that we could get for him.

Of course Ashley believed in the banker's balance, and, from the ease with which the loan of five pounds had been had, assumed that more might be had as easily; and not long after his return from the north—for his mother got better, against all expectation—he asked James for another loan; this time to enable his mother and sister to come up to London and make a home with him. And when he spoke of his sister—his dear and beautiful Cora—I saw, what I had long suspected, that one cause of my brother's intense attachment to Ashley was in his love for Cora. It was almost pathetic to watch the expression that came over his face while Ashley was speaking. If only Cora could be brought to London! if only he might sometimes see her!

Ashley wanted twenty pounds. If five could only be had by pawning my ring, I ask you, Georgie, where could twenty come

from? James was in an agony, and I was powerless to help him. If sorrow and pain could have bought these men their happiness they would have had it without much delay; but what could a weak and ignorant girl do for them? Absolutely nothing! I saw James look round the shabby room, and I saw where his eyes rested. By rare good fortune he had been commissioned to paint a portrait for one of those so-called patrons of art whose patronage consists in getting the best productions of clever young men, yet unknown, at merely nominal prices. It was for a rich City merchant to whom James had been introduced, and it was to be thirty pounds when done. Could he mortgage it? There was no use in asking Mr. Hawes to give him an advance. He thought he had done great things in giving the order at all; and there was every probability that if he paid him on delivery he would charge him a per-centage on the transaction, and make a profit out of his "cash down." No there was no use in going to him! He had lent my brother a magnificent silver-gilt hanaper which he wanted introduced into his picture. It had been a presentation-piece from some society or other, and the City merchant was very proud of his cup. It was a hideous thing, artistically speaking, but it was worth some hundreds of pounds.

My brother looked at this tankard. I do not know what made me do it, but I took it up quietly, and dusted it with my apron.

"I hope this has not got scratched or hurt in any way," I said; and it was rare that I spoke before Ashley. "You remember Mr. Hawes is coming for it to-morrow, Jamie?"

"What a shame that a fellow like that should have such a thing—and so vilely ugly too!" said Ashley. "It is worth only the weight of metal; but that is being worth something," he added, as if reflecting.

"Yes, it is hideously ugly—criminally ugly!" said James; "but it cost no end of money, I dare say. Old Hawes, I know, sets great store by it, the old rhinoceros! But as it is, it is too good for him. And to think that we should be at the orders of such a man! —that we should be obliged to put such a vile thing as that into our work!"

He spoke in the artist's injured tone. I have often noticed that artists are injured when they are employed by men who do not understand art—Philistines as they call them.

"Better send it to the smelting-pot!" laughed Ashley.

I say laughed, but it was a bitter sneer rather than a laugh.

James flushed, and I trembled. It never occurred to me as possible that my brother could do anything so dishonourable as deal with another man's property—my dear Jamie, the very soul of chivalrous feeling! and yet I somehow feared Ashley's suggestion. I knew how he loved that man, and I knew that he, quite as much as Ashley, wanted to see Cora and Mrs. Graham in London. But wishing and doing, envying and stealing, are two different things; and though I trembled I did not definitely distrust.

That night Ashley slept with us. I was going to say as usual; for, indeed, it was a very frequent thing now; and I passed the night sitting on a wooden chair before the empty kitchen hearth.

I had fallen into an uneasy doze just at the last hours, as the day began to break, when I was awakened by hearing a step on the stairs. The house was one of those creaking old places where a mouse could hardly stir without being heard; and there was something in the build of it that made my little kitchen like an echoing vault. The step came down the stairs and across the hall; I heard the door-chain rattle, and the bolt shoot back; and then the door opened and slammed to again; and a hurried footfall passed on the pavement. How like Ashley's step! An unaccountable terror came over me; what was he doing out so early?—but then I thought it might be Mr. Thomson, the lodger, who lived next door to me up-stairs, and who used sometimes to go out very early—before any one else was astir. He was a commission agent, as he called himself; an irreverent servant used to speak of him as "our commercial gent;" and, my brother, who had an artist's contempt for commerce in all its branches, always called him the bagman. He was a bold, coarse, good-looking man, with large roving eyes and long fingers; a man for whom I had an especial horror, partly because he would waylay me on the top landing when I went to bed, asking me all manner of things about my brother and his work, and who were his patrons, and what he got for such and such a picture, &c. He wished to pass himself off as knowing something about painting, and he knew as much of it as I did of algebra! Still, we had no right to dislike him as we did, and so I often said to James when we were alone.

Determined then that it should be Mr. Thomson who had gone out early, I tried to

calm my nerves—for I was nervous, foolish as it sounds. One cannot sit night after night in a damp, dark kitchen, without getting nervous! By degrees the day broke fully, and I went up-stairs to do the house work before my brother got up. For I was the only servant we had; we could not afford even a share in the drudge kept for the house. When I went up-stairs I found the door of our sitting-room open—just ajar—as if it had been pulled to and not shut. I went in. James was still asleep behind the screen. I could hear his breathing, poor fellow!—such a fast and heavy sleeper as he was! I looked round the room with a kind of dread, as if I expected to see something terrible; on the table, where the hanaper had stood last night, lay the velvet-lined oaken case—open and empty. The precious deposit which the rich City merchant had left, not without some half-insulting words of caution, and which he was coming to reclaim to-day, was gone.

I called my brother hurriedly, and he woke up.

"James!" I said, "what has become of the hanaper?"

"The hanaper? what? what do you mean?" he answered.

"It is not here, James; it has been taken out of the case—it has gone."

"Gone! nonsense!" he said. "Why, who could have taken it, Rose?"

I did not speak—I could not. It was so clear, and yet so dreadful.

"Call Ashley," said James, his thoughts turning instinctively to the man he loved and trusted most.

All this time James had been dressing hastily behind the screen, and now he came out into the room. Just as he did so, the street-door opened by a latch-key, and Ashley came up the stairs and straight into our sitting-room. His coat was wet—it was raining heavily—and he carried the latch-key in his hand.

"Here, old fellow," he said to James, quietly; "here is your latch-key. I took it with me, as I went out so early."

"Ashley!" said James, in his scared way.

"Hey! what's the matter?" cried the other.

"The hanaper!" was all my brother could say.

"What about it, man?"

"It is gone!"

"By Jupiter! you don't say so," said Ashley, turning pale.

"I can swear it was here last night," said Jamie, excitedly, "Rose herself put it away in the case."

"Yes, I saw it," answered Ashley, gloomily.

Then he turned suddenly to me, and looked at me as I thought suspiciously. I reddened under his eyes, and he saw me flush. It seemed to me as if he could read my thoughts—as if he knew what I knew. And how could he? Young people always imagine that they are seen through, and I thought I was seen through now.

Jamie saw nothing—suspected nothing. He was sitting with his head resting on his hands, and his elbows on his knees, feeling as a man does when he is suddenly plunged into destruction—when his name is tainted and his career closed. As for me, the whole world seemed to have crashed into ruin at my feet; but the one I could not understand was Ashley. If I might have died before this moment! I could not believe him guilty, and yet I could not doubt the evidence of my senses. He had been out in the early morning—so far indeed he confessed honestly enough; no one else had been out—that I could swear to; and certainly no burglary had been committed. And it was not to be supposed that we harboured thieves in the house.

At that moment Mr. Thomson came down-stairs, whistling as he passed our door. He looked in and nodded, and his great black eyes roved all about the place and seemed to take in every inch and scrap there was to be seen.

"A wet morning," he said, in his thick oily voice, shaking his large loose cloak about him as he gave a kind of growling shiver. Then he strode down the stairs, flung open the street-door, and slammed it against him noisily: and so went on his way, whistling. How I wished that we all had as light a heart as this unpleasant bagman! and that one among us had so clear a conscience!

I was so sorry for poor James! He seemed quite paralysed, and though Ashley proposed sending for the police, and putting the whole place under a kind of arrest—and I wondered at his audacity—yet my brother refused to adopt this or any other suggestion, but sat, as I tell you, with his head on his hands and his elbows resting on his knees, more like a creature crazed with dread than anything else. Meanwhile time was drawing on, and it drew close to the hour when Mr. Hawes had appointed to come for his treasure.

"James," I said, "dear Jamie! you must

decide on something! It is twelve o'clock now, and Mr. Hawes comes at one. What will you do, dear? What can we do?"

I ought to have told you that by this time James and I were alone. Ashley had been obliged to leave, and for the first time in our acquaintance I had not been sorry to see him go. He had been very kind to me and very cheery with James, but I shrank from him visibly; though he looked at me as people do look at something seen for the first time, and seemed almost as if he had found me out, after such a long period of overlooking! At any other time I should have been transported with his attention; it would have been my pride, my joy, my heaven, but now—I felt degraded by it, as if he wanted to buy my silence, to make me an accomplice in his crime through my love. Oh, Georgie, what an awful thing it is to feel that the one you love above all else in life is base and false!

Well! when I spoke to James like this I seemed to startle him as if from a dream.

"Yes, Rose, I remember," he said, getting up and pushing his dank fair hair from his white face. "I will go and make it all right with him. My poor little Rose! you have had a nasty fright, dear, and you are quite pale and trembling. Never mind now, it will soon be all right."

He kissed me tenderly, and before I could stop him, or even answer back his loving words, he too had left the house, and left me indeed alone.

I cannot tell you much more of what happened, for I only remember things very confusedly. I remember Mr. Hawes coming to the house, and I remember his loud angry voice and furious face; I remember a swarm of policemen in the room—the place seemed filled with them—and I remember Ashley's grand bearing and noble look in the midst of them. He seemed like a beautiful demon to me—like Lucifer: a god, but a fallen one. And then—oh, Georgie, do not let me think of it!—I remember a noise, as of men's feet, a tumult of voices, and a hustling at the door, and Something was brought in and laid tenderly on the bed. It was my brother—all that was of him now!—found dead in a lonely part of Kensington Gardens, with an empty bottle of poison in his hand. Proud and sensitive as he was, the shock and horror had been too much for him, and he chose to brave the wrath of God rather than undergo the doubt, the accusation of his fellow-men.

After this the newspaper reports can tell you the story better than I. You know that Ashley was arrested on suspicion, tried, and acquitted for want of sufficient evidence; acquitted but not cleared; for all that my dear Jamie's death divided the suspicion. The oddest part of it was that the hanaper could not be traced in the remotest way. It had apparently vanished off the face of the earth, and how it had gone, or what had become of it, was as much a mystery to the police as to us. It looked as if Ashley had taken it—and for my own part I never doubted it; but what had he done with it? who had he sold it to? and how was it that the police could not trace it? And how was it, too, that Ashley was suddenly so flush of money if he had not stolen it? He said an old aunt had died and left him a legacy. God forgive me! I did not believe a word of it!

And yet I loved him, Georgie! Unworthy as I believed him to be, and the cause of that poor boy's death, I loved him with my whole heart. I had grown into womanhood loving him; and, if even I had wished it, I could not have cut him out of my life now. But I would not marry him. He asked me more than once, and he pleaded passionately—for he suddenly quite changed towards me, as I have said, and from utter neglect passed into the most intense love. But I was firm. I could not have married him then! So he went away to America, and I came down here to Ambleside, as governess to the rector's children; and here I have been ever since—two years—two long, painful, weary years! And now I am going to America next week; my passage is taken, and in a fortnight's time I shall be standing on the quay at New York, with Ashley's Graham's hand in mine! If you read this letter you will see what has changed my life, and what has taken me as a penitent to the feet of the man I love, and have always loved.

She gave me an open letter written in a faint and trembling hand, and signed A. Thomson. It said that "he, the writer, being now at the point of death, wished to make confession, and reparation so far as he could, of the evil he had caused. For it was he who had taken the hanaper; and he had it under his large cloak while he stood by the open door of the room, and nodded, and spoke to Rose Mantell of the weather. It was a bold stroke," he said, "and the idea occurred to him only when he heard Ashley go out so early. Knowing the habits of the Mantells, and their hours, he had stolen down-stairs to James's room and found the door ajar. Ashley had

left it open when he went in for the latch-key. He had often seen the hanaper, and as often coveted it, and thought how much he could make of it; for among his acquaintances was a 'fence' "—(he had the grace to explain the word further on)—"and who was perfectly safe. He saw the oaken case; noiselessly unslid the clasp; and in a quarter of an hour after he left the house, the rich City merchant's presentation plate was seething in the smelting pot. He had timed his going out to accord just with Ashley's return—that he might show himself at the door of the room unconcerned and ignorant of the trouble there was within it; and while they were all too much dazed with their loss to know very clearly what was best to be done. No suspicion had ever fallen on him, though his rooms had been searched, as those of the other inmates of the house; and he had gone on living in his garret with honour and punctual payments until now. And now he wished to pay his last debt; when he could die in peace, and with an easy conscience." Easy conscience, the rogue! —and yet, who is to limit the mercy of the Infinite! God forgive us all, sinners that we are!

THE DEATH'S HEAD MOTH.

I. THE PALACE DINNER.

The court of the Grand Duke of Eisenherz was dining, and dining moodily. It had been said by the cynics of the Grand Duke's capital that the only pleasant hour spent by the miserable court was the dinner hour; yet on this particular occasion even that hour was not very agreeable. The sickly little duke, a voluptuary, a fop, and a fool, as heartless as he was brainless, was testy, snappish, fretful, and splenetic, and in the most vexatious of tempers, complaining of the wine, swearing terrible oaths at his servants, kicking his pet spaniels, snubbing the Lord Chamberlain, almost barking at the minister of war, old iron-necked General Blossow, contradicting the Countess Schwellenberg, the lady of the robes, and refusing even to look in the direction of that old painted hag his stepmother, the duchess, who, reddening behind the thick coats of white and of red vermilion that choked up her wrinkles, was in as viperish a temper as could rise from the depths of a proud and evil heart, corrupted by all the petty ambitions of a small and depraved court in that demoralised age that immediately preceded the red deluge of the great revolution.

It was an October twilight, the few pale gleams of day lingered on the glasses, jugs, fruit dishes, and silver that strewed the vast table. Here and there the blade of a fruit knife, or the stopper of a decanter, glanced out of the gloom which elsewhere had risen slowly like a black flood, and submerged the German Pharaohling and all his host. The duke's face, pale, jaded, and fretful, could be dimly seen by the light of his powdered hair, but the duchess, who sat gaunt and erect, with her back to a central window, appeared a mere shapeless mass of darkness.

In all that concourse there were only two persons really natural and at their ease, and even these two were unhappy—more unhappy, indeed, than their fellows. The one was a beautiful young girl, who sat on the right hand of the duchess. Her tender face, irradiated with clusters of sunshiny hair, was spiritualised by a fine intelligence, and dignified by a certain calm power that gave almost a queenly character to a beauty otherwise specially gentle, loving, and womanly. She seemed unable and unwilling to conceal a certain foreboding of coming rank; but pride in that gentle heart was no evil passion. In that pure soil the poison plant had lost its venom, and glowed only with amaranthine flowers. The sceptre she would sway, those who loved her said, would be rather a branch of lilies than the hated sword.

The other was a pale intellectual-looking young man, dressed in a plain austere black velvet suit, reflecting light only from the cut steel buttons which glistened here and there in the last glimmer of day. Professor Mohrart was the court physician, an honour acquired by him at an early age, rather by dint of his acknowledged learning than any special regard borne him by either the dowager duchess or the duke, whom he disdained to flatter, and whose patronage of alchemy and astrology he strongly condemned. He spoke but little, and seemed lost in contemplation, except when now and then his large dark eyes fell with a mournful and tender regard on Mademoiselle Blossow, the daughter of the minister of war, and the duke's betrothed. There was indeed a rumour in Eisenherz that a few years before he had been attached to Mademoiselle Blossow, but that the stern old general, from ambitious motives, had refused him her hand. This dream was no doubt long past. He had about him now the preoccupied air of the student, and he seemed out of place among those heartless courtiers and self-conscious ladies of honour.

"We start then to-morrow, Frederick, to Schwarzstein," said the duchess, suddenly, in her shrill voice. "The coaches must be ready by three, to reach Graffenberg by dusk."

"My honoured and revered stepmother," said the young duke, with listless spitefulness, "you are only too good and kind in arranging the movements of our court. Since we last spoke to you we have changed our mind. I and the general take Beatrice with us to-morrow hunting in the forest at Eichenwald. That exercise will be too fatiguing for you, we fear. The chamberlain can go with you to your worthy cousin at Schwarzstein."

The dowager duchess turned livid through her paint, but made no reply, and said insolently to one of the ladies in waiting, "Light that candle for me that is on the mantelpiece. It is like sitting in a vault."

The lady so harshly bidden to do this servile duty, performed it with an obsequious and unresisting humility, and as she did so, a large moth, with rich brown and yellow and mottled wings, and a black and yellow speckled body, settled on the wall before the light. It was a death's head moth, with that curious mark that is vulgarly supposed to resemble a skull unusually conspicuous on its thorax. It uttered a faint shrill plaintive cry like that of a mouse, and flew back into the darkness. It passed close to Mademoiselle Beatrice, wavered over to Professor Mohrart, then brushed the face of the ex-duchess with its wings, and settled on the table before the young duke, who, snatching the fan of a lady next him, struck at the moth with such force that, though he missed the insect, he snapped the stems of several wine-glasses. The hidden tiger within him leaped out now as he sprang up, threw down his chair, and tore at the great crimson bell-rope, till the corridors echoed again, and half a dozen servants hurried in with candelabra.

"Madame la Duchesse," he said, petulantly, to his mother, "you know I detest darkness, yet you will force me to sit here to save half a dozen wax candles. We will not be controlled. Charles, Louis, tell the major-domo we will dine no more without lights, no, not even in summer. There seems to be a doubt amongst some of you who reigns at Eisenherz; you shall soon learn. Mademoiselle Beatrice, I kiss your hand. Ladies, adieu. Gentlemen, the faro table is ready—let us try fortune again; and you fellows, search the room and kill that moth. I hate to have those things buzzing about."

"Poor moth," thought the professor. "Poor Eisenherz! That man will grow up a monster."

"That moth brings bad luck to some of us," said one of the footmen to another.

II. THE CUP OF CHOCOLATE.

Two things were well known to the meanest lacqueys of the palace. First, that the dowager duchess detested the intended marriage of her stepson; secondly, that the quarrels between the duke and his ambitious stepmother were every day growing more embittered.

It was the evening of the day that the duchess was to return from Schwarzstein. The duke has come in tired from hunting, and retired to his private apartment. In the embrasure of a window in one of the brightly lit antechambers sat the young physician, looking out thoughtfully into the starry night, half sheltered by a heavy crimson velvet curtain which he held back from the mullioned panes.

"She loved me once," he thought. "She told me she did, and I loved her, till her father and the cruel world came between us. Does she love me still? Oh, could I but learn that!"

He started; for an icy hand like that of a corpse had touched him on the shoulder. He looked round. It was the duchess, who pointed to the open door of an inner boudoir, and led him in. She locked the door, and stood close to the surprised professor.

"Professor Mohrart," she said, "you well know how great a regard I feel for you. What honours we have destined for you, you may not know so well. We know you — wise, faithful, and true; we would trust you with an especial duty. We claim but one small service."

The young physician bowed gravely.

"Madame la Duchesse," he said, "I am a faithful servant of the house of Eisenherz. Your wishes are laws. All that I can do, subservient to my duty to God and man, I will do to serve either you or the duke."

"Answer me first one question truly. You did once love Mademoiselle Beatrice, the duke's betrothed?"

The young man hesitated; then, with almost a groan, he said, "I did."

"And you still love Beatrice Blossow?"

Professor Mohrart made no reply.

"You do love her. I have seen a letter you wrote her, urging her to fly with you to England, to escape the match she detested; you see, I know all. You have her letter, refusing to go, but professing unalterable love for you. Give me that letter; you are not rich. You shall have ten thousand Friedrich d'ors for that mere small square of pink paper."

The professor remained silent.

"You shall marry the daughter of the richest noble in all Eisenherz."

"Madame la Duchesse," said the professor at last, "you would prevent the marriage of the duke, it is clear. Whatever I may or may not have once felt, I now owe all humble homage and duty to that beautiful and amiable lady, and I will give you no help in this matter."

"You refuse, then?"

"I refuse."

"You defy my anger?"

"I neither defy it nor dread it. I refuse to help you to prevent the marriage of the duke, your stepson, with Mademoiselle Beatrice."

"You persist in that?"

"I do."

"You love her, and yet you would marry her to another! She loves you, yet prefers wealth and a title. Bah!"

"No; she has forgotten me; and I wish her to have that title, which is her ambition."

"And you deny recent letters?"

"I do. They may have been written, but they have never reached me."

"And your own of the fourth of last month?"

"*That* I wrote, but Mademoiselle Beatrice has not replied to me, Madame la Duchesse, since I broke off the engagement on her not answering my letter pressing her to fly at the first rumour of the duke's attentions."

"Fool!"—the duchess as she spoke unlocked a secretaire, and drew out a small packet of letters—"there are both hers and yours; they were intercepted by my orders. All I want you to do is to take her last and produce it yourself to the duke, altering the date of it to yesterday as a proof of her contempt and hatred of him. Fool! do you not see she has taken his hand only in despair of gaining back yours? Punish her for so easily relinquishing you."

Mohrart stood there like a man mortally wounded: his heart ceased almost to beat. Then a fire came into his eyes. "Tempter, sent from below," he said, "you have wrecked the happiness of two hearts, merely to help forward some evil scheme, to advance some evil purpose, whither tending you yourself best know; but I will not interrupt the progress of Beatrice to the rank and power she will ennoble. I have prayed to Heaven to give me the strength to surrender her for the happiness of this people. The strength was given me. I will not turn back. I will not be faithless to Heaven now to advance the wicked intrigues of a corrupt woman."

The duchess was at a white heat. She burned, but there were no sparkles and there was no blaze.

"'Tis well," she said. "Wise only in books, you push from you honours I offered you. Fools! you shall both perish; you shall learn what it is to brave my anger. Had I found you obedient I might have seated you on the throne by my side, now only misery and desolation await you. You do not comprehend the grandeur of my views, and you place yourself beneath the foot of a mindless girl. Be it so. You shall soon learn how devastating is the anger of a slighted woman."

Here the duchess unlocked the door and angrily rang a silver bell that stood on the table. A hard-featured female attendant instantly appeared with a tray of chocolate and a little crystal bottle of ratafia.

"Professor," she said, "will you please add two drops of that ratafia to the duke's chocolate; my hand shakes; he prefers it to vanille. Louise, tell the duke his chocolate awaits him here."

"I did not wish Louise to see that we had quarrelled," said the duchess. "Adieu, Professor Mohrart. Adieu, long-suffering lover. You have not gall enough to hate even the man who will marry the woman who still loves you. Excellent Christian, adieu; some day, perhaps, you will think of revenge, but beware of mine first."

The duke's voice was heard at the very moment the last glimpse of the crimson silk train of the duchess swept from the room. He came in patting a huge tawny stag hound with which a long-eared spaniel of the finest dimensions was playing with dignified condescension.

"Well, professor," he said, as he threw himself languidly in a gilt chair, "to tell you the truth, I am infernally wearied with that absurd pastime that men have christened hunting, and which seems to me a mere ingenious way of encouraging men of fashion to break their valuable necks. My amiable stepmother sent me word that Desanges had brought my chocolate here. Aye, there I see it is. Would you oblige me by handing it—a thousand thanks. Do you care for Sèvres, M. le Professor?"

The professor replied in the affirmative.

"This cup of mine is mere peasant crockery to the jewelled set I have ordered for our wedding breakfast—by the by, my dear professor, why did you never marry? There's that handsome blonde daughter of the lord chamberlain—with thirty thousand——"

Here the duke raised the cup to his lips and began languidly to sip. He put it down.

"This chocolate is far too strong of the ratafia." As he said this the duke suddenly rose with a peculiar wild stare in his eyes, staggered, caught at the tablecloth for support, and dragged it towards him till it fell on the floor, throwing the candelabra down with a crash. Then he fell heavily forward upon his face before the astonished professor could run to his assistance.

The professor knelt over the fallen man, and was in the act of loosening his neckcloth as the duchess and her servant entered. They uttered piercing cries of horror, and ran to raise the duke in their arms; but already the duke was in the agonies of death. The only words he faintly articulated were:

"It was Mohrart who put poison into my chocolate. I always thought he hated me. Mind you, people, that he is broken—on—the —wheel——" Then he moaned again, made a faint effort to rise, groaned twice, and fell back dead in the arms of a servant.

III. THE SEALED KNOTS.

"THERE is no hope for him," said a barber in a crowd outside the town hall of Eisenherz, the day of Mohrart's trial, to his friend the saddler, "no hope at all, I tell you. The Lord Chamberlain's own man, who has been all day at the trial, tells me that the dowager duchess's maid can swear she saw Mohrart pour laurel water into the duke's chocolate, a bottle of ratafia mixed with laurel water was actually found on the floor of Mohrart's bedroom, and there was laurel water afterwards discovered in the chocolate left in the cup. Oh, he was a double-dyed villain! Yet he looked so plausible. Well, I shall go and see him on the wheel, neighbour."

"And the duchess's gentleman, I hear," said a third gossip, who just then came up "has produced intercepted letters, showing love still existed between Mohrart and Lady Beatrice; but Mohrart's defence is that the dates have been forged, or that they were letters of a year ago, before the duke admired Beatrice, and when he and Beatrice were engaged to be married. There is a report that the Sealed Knots intend to rescue him from prison, believing him a victim of some state intrigue, so the guards

at the prison were yesterday doubled. Our duchess has a tight grasp."

"Stuff!" said the other, "I not only don't believe it, but what's more, I don't even believe there are any conspirators in Eisenherz who assume such a name."

"Come, come, neighbour," said the first, "we know there are disaffected people in Eisenherz, and it does not much matter what name they go by. You yourself probably are one of them, because you deny what every one knows is a fact. They know each other, that's certain."

The gossips were but too correct. Poor Mohrart was that day found guilty and sentenced to be broken on the wheel on the first day of November. An hour before midnight of the day of his trial the prisoner's cell door grated open. Mohrart leaped up from his knees, for he was praying. It was General Blossow.

"Mohrart," he said, "I was no friend of yours when you were in prosperity. I hated you because I thought you had proudly refused to answer the letters of my daughter who loved you, you thought I coveted the duke's power and title; but now I see it all. The associates of the Sealed Knots have proved to me that the dates of the letters shown at the trial were forged, and that it was the duchess and not you who poisoned the duke. She had long resolved his death. Through one of the same secret societies I have just gained access here to-night to plan your escape. Do you still love Beatrice? Did you ever really love her?"

"General Blossow, I love your daughter, so that I would not dread even that terrible death to-morrow, could I but press my lips to hers but once more. I always loved her. It was my evil pride alone that forbade me to ask the reason why my letters of passionate appeal as well as of passionate accusation were never answered. Saints in Heaven, how could I ever suspect her gentle heart of forgetfulness or of mean ambition!"

"Beatrice is here. You shall see her; she knows all now," said the general, throwing open the door. The next instant the lovers were clasped in each other's arms, in all the ecstatic joy of renewed hope.

Suddenly their conversation was interrupted by the tramp of feet, and a sound of grounded muskets. The door flew open, and the duchess appeared upon the threshold.

"General," she said, mockingly, with the old viperish hatred in her pursed-up eyes, "you seem surprised to see me. You were rash to trust my paid emissaries. I too, you see, have dealings with conspirators. Every step you took I knew. As for this wanton, seize her soldiers, for she has been an accomplice in this detestable crime, as I before found. General Blossow, you shall answer us promptly for this treason. Where are your brave conspirators of the Sealed Knot now? As for you, poisoner, the wheel will soon be ready for you. Yes, if half Eisenherz had joined in killing my poor stepson, half Eisenherz should perish miserably as you shall. Soldiers, to separate prisons with them. Remove them. Jailers, tear that woman from the murderer's arms."

There was a groan, the shriek of a fainting woman, and the ponderous door closed upon the unhappy Mohrart as the doors of a vault might do upon a corpse. The next time it opened it would be for the soldiers who were to lead him to a death of shame.

He seemed forsaken even by Heaven.

IV. THE INSURRECTION.

THERE is a limit to the patience even of slaves. An insurrection had broken out in the city of Eisenherz. A rumour that Count Schwellenberg was marching upon the city from Hesse Darmstadt, with ten thousand men, having been summoned by the urgent entreaties of the duchess, had set every heart on fire. The mysterious members of the Sealed Knot Club had been, however, it was said, untiring in their efforts to delay the revolt, which they considered premature.

The insurgents, in an irresistible deluge, were pouring on towards the palace, now closely guarded by two thousand Hessian soldiers, who had sworn to defend the duchess to the last. The sea of angry faces had already surged into the great square of the cathedral, to mass together for the attack upon the palace. A dozen blacksmiths having dragged a cannon from the adjacent park, were already shouting for the advance, when a small group of masked men quietly emerged from a house next the cathedral, and dispersing through the crowd, whispered directions to the leaders of the mob. Their mandates at first seemed to be disputed.

"Let's burn the Hell-cat!" cried some. "She showed no mercy for others; she has no mercy for Mohrart or the general's daughter."

"Break her on the wheel," cried another, "as she did my father!"

"Hang her from the cathedral tower!" screamed a third. "She had my son shot yesterday for merely crying, 'Long live General Blossow.'"

But the frantic outcries of these men were in vain. A secret irresistible agency seemed at work. Even the blacksmiths left the cannon at the cathedral doors, the savage pikemen and hammermen, by twos and threes, turned sullenly homeward. The roaring crowd gradually grew silent as by enchantment, and melted like ice, for so the Sealed Knots had willed it.

When the duchess heard of it, she smiled, tapped her fan, and calmly said, "I thought the scum would never face bayonets. The instinct of self-preservation is still, you see, strong, even in the detested canaille."

V. THE CHAPEL ON THE MOUNTAIN.

IT was the annual custom of the duchess, who was as superstitious as she was cruel, to spend two days in the first week of every November in a little chapel half way up a lonely mountain,

three miles from Eisenherz. Her enemies said that by that short seclusion the wretched woman believed that she atoned for all the sins of the past twelvemonth. She usually went with only one attendant, the old soldier and his wife, who took care of the chapel, providing her with simple food.

It was a cold and foggy evening when the duchess descended from her great gilt coach, and took the winding way through the woods that led her to the chapel. Her yellow velvet train rustled over the wet dead leaves. The wind was sighing among the leafless larches, and moaning among the black boughs of the fir trees. Two hundred yards up, a stirring in the brake startled the duchess; she looked, and saw, by the light her servant carried, an old man, whom she recognised as the old guardian of the chapel, kneeling and gathering fir-cones. He looked pale and ill, and did not at first rise, but shook either with cold or fear when the duchess addressed him.

"Karl Hauffman," she cried, "why are you so far from the chapel? Did you not expect me? Is the man imbecile? Answer."

The old man rose, drew himself feebly up, and made the military salute, still trembling with the cold as he made the salute, and came nearer. Just then an owl hooted three times.

"Your royal highness," he said, his teeth chattering, "we did expect you; we had your message yesterday; but my wife is ill, and I have been out gathering fir-cones for the fire."

"You should not leave the chapel. Are the altar lamps lit for our devotions?"

"Your royal highness, they are. We expected you half an hour ago."

"And are the candles ready in the room of the Twelve Apostles?"

"Everything has been made ready for your royal highness; and I will go forward with the lantern through the wood."

"The wind seems rising," said the duchess.

"There will be a storm soon," said the old man, as he led on with the light.

As the old man pushed open the rusty chapel door, which was wet with damp, the wind shook the mouldy black and silver hangings of the walls, which rose and fell with a melancholy wavelike swell. Two of the candles on the altar blew out with the draught. At that moment a horn sounded higher up the mountain, and seemed to be answered by an echo far down towards the city, and an owl screeched as if in answer. Then there was a deep silence.

The duchess knelt for some time in prayer. Then she rose, and said to her attendant, "You remain here, while I go and make my confessions, according to my custom, in the chamber of the Apostles."

The duchess rose, crossed herself, and lifting the black hangings to the left of the altar, entered the apartment which her superstition had so strangely furnished. The black curtain fell behind her, and seemed to shut her out for ever from all living things. It seemed a grave that she had entered. It was a long low-roofed room, dimly lit, and hung with dark tapestry like the chapel. In the centre stood a long table, covered with a dark red cloth, round which, with gilt cups before them, sat twelve wax figures of the apostles, as large as life, with flaxen hair and beards, and clothed according to the strictest tradition of the old painters. The wax faces and staring black eyes of eleven of the number were fixed on Saint Peter, who, with the gilt cross keys in his right hand, sat at their head. The attitude of each apostle was varied. Saint John was turned half round listening to Saint Thomas; Judas was clutching the bag; Saint James was pointing to Heaven; Saint Mark was gazing thoughtfully on Saint Luke; Saint Luke was regarding Saint Peter with the intensest veneration. Three apostles alone at the lower end of the table were in shadow, for the lights at that end of the table had blown out.

The mind of the guilty duchess was rapt in awe at the sight of these august figures, which strongly stirred her imagination. She cast herself at the feet of Saint Peter.

"Holy Saint Peter," she exclaimed, "intercede for me at the golden gates, I pray thee, intercede for one who has done evil, it is true, but only that good might come. I struck down my chief enemy only that the people might be the more wisely governed and the town be saved from the tyranny of heresy. To-morrow a traitor dies upon the wheel, and an ambitious wanton will be found dead in her cell. Pardon, Holy Saint! Pardon! Let a miraculous voice, I pray thee, answer the penitent who now lies at thy feet. He does not answer. Is Heaven silent? Ye lesser apostles hear me then. Spare a guilty woman! Spare me! Spare——"

As she uttered these incoherent prayers, the wretched woman, casting off her jewels and dishevelling her powdered hair, crept round from figure to figure in an agony of the most abject and superstitious fear.

Suddenly, as she burst into hysterical tears of passionate supplication, and crept on her knees from figure to figure, the first apostle in shadow, at whose feet she knelt and whose robe she at that moment clasped, sprang to his feet, held her down and seized her throat before she could utter a cry for help; a second and a third figure rose, and the three struck her to the ground with three fierce, swift, and simultaneous stabs. Then the three men disguised as apostles strode into the outer chapel.

"Woman!" they said to the terrified attendant of the duchess, "your mistress needs your help. Tell her the Sealed Knots planned this vengeance for her crimes. In the palace where it had long awaited her the vengeance might have been less sure and deadly." In a moment they had disappeared in the darkness.

It was afterwards said that on the frozen painted cruel face of that detestable dying woman, a Death's Head Moth was found resting. The omen had been accomplished. As

they raised the stiffened body the insect flew off into the fir wood and was no more seen.

The miserable woman did not survive many hours. Her party lost all heart after her death, the chief ministers of her cruelty fled. General Blossow, instantly released, at once surrendered the town to the Bavarian troops, who, thanks to the Sealed Knots, were in time to garrison Eisenherz and repulse an attempt to surprise the town by the cousin of the duchess. Mohrart and Beatrice were married the moment the Bavarian rule was established and the city grew secure.

This strange story is a true one, and is still preserved as a tradition in the south of Germany. The chapel on the mountain side, now a ruin, still crowns the mountain above Eisenherz, and the road winds on towards Schwarzstein and the Bavarian frontier.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER VII.

THURSDAY.—I have not yet heard from Frankfort, but they tell me here that the merchant is away at his estates. There is no hurry, however—nay, I should wish for a little time to devote myself to this mission, as I may call it. I have watched Grainger all this day, and he has not gone in—at least I have not seen him myself; for I must keep to my fixed rule of not entering that cruel spiders' net, that tigers' den. I asked him this evening. He laughed, and would give me no answer. "Don't expect miracles," he said; "you can't expect a man to reform all at once. That little picture we made out together last night is still going about with me, dancing before my eyes. I wish I could shut it out; I did so for some years. Come in," he added, "and let us at least look at them, as the hungry beggars find some relief in looking into a cook-shop window."

I shook my head. "I have made a sort of resolution," I said, "and must keep to it. It would be sanctioning, in some sort, what I cannot approve."

"What rubbish!" he said, suddenly turning on me, then checked himself. "I beg your pardon; I have not got rid of my old ways as yet. I wish I had had those scruples. Talk to me now about her, about Dora — Mrs. Austen, I mean. It's like Annot Lyle and her harp."

These little allusions and turns of expressions which dotted over all Grainger's conversation, with many others that I cannot recal, show what a cultivated taste he had. I did not give him credit for being so entertaining and amusing. We dined together that day, and again we strayed back to the old subject.

"The night," he said, "when I got that news, is one I cannot dare to look back to. It makes my head unsteady; you know the feeling. Here, kellner, cognac! That's the only thing."

"No," I said, "it is *not* the only thing; it is as dangerous as the other. Forgive me if I advise you again. I am going to have some sherry, and oblige me by taking some of it instead."

He groaned, laughed a little roughly, as his habit was, and said:

"Well, I suppose so. No cognac, then. What on earth is all this? You are making me do things that no other man could attempt."

"I have no power," I said, looking down. "I am working with another charm."

He paused. "Ah, yes; I suppose that is so."

I had already come to know the clergyman of the place. He had sent me his book, and I suspect some of the gamblers' money figured there to a good amount. I met this gentleman in the evening, and he came up to speak to me. There was something about him I did not like, and he had an authoritative air which I was inclined to resent. (I hear Dora, who believes in clergymen to the very bottom of her gentle heart, and, I suspect, believes that, with their coats, shovel hats, white ties, &c., they have come down straight from Heaven; have a sort of angelic conformation, wings folded up, &c.)

"I see," he said, sitting down next me on one of the green garden chairs—"I see you are intimate with that man here, Mr. Grainger, or Captain Grainger, as he calls himself. May I ask, do you know what his character is?"

I was happy to answer him with both facts and logic.

"The War Office also calls him captain," I said; "and I *do* know a good deal about him."

"I am afraid nothing good, then; for it is my duty to warn you, as a sort of temporary parishioner, the care of whose soul I have, that his character is very bad indeed, and that he is not a person any one of character should be seen with. He is a most dangerous man. You are young and inexperienced, Mr. Austen, and he has led several, as young and experienced, into mischief already. That is the reason I speak to you."

I could not help smiling. This rustic clergyman, fetched out of some outlying district to this doubtful duty, lecturing *me* and others! It was, of course, *in* his duty, and he meant well; but I think it was *rather* free and easy to a mere stranger.

"I am quite capable of taking care of myself, Mr. Lewis," I said. "I have my own reasons for associating with that gentleman. What if I succeeded in influencing *him* in changing his life and heart; does *that* at all enter into your philosophy?"

"Oh, well and good," he said, smiling. "God forbid I should interfere. But we must judge these things by the ordinary rule of the world. Have you any reason to lead you to hope?"

"Yes," I said.

"Well, then, you ought to go and look after him now; for I was passing from the news-room just now, and saw him playing frantically. Come with me, and I will show him to you."

"I never go into that place," I said, coldly, and meaning a rebuke.

"Into the news-room?" he said. "Why not? Ah, you haven't patience to wait for the papers. It's a very good school for patience."

"As you ask me the reason, I do not wish to be indebted to men who fatten on human misery. I make no merit of it, but I think it better not."

"This sounds strange," he said. "Let me ask, do you know the Bishop of Gravesend? He goes there every day. Do you know the good Lord Calborough, who takes the chair at his meetings? I have seen him looking over shoulders at the roulette. Ah, I see you distrust yourself. Well, there is no disgrace in flying from the danger."

I have always resented this sort of superior knowledge of you which some clergymen affect, much as a doctor says, "Ah, I know—feel a pain *here*—exactly—a sense of fluttering after meals—exactly so." This rather nettled me. I had heard, too, he was rather sarcastic, and was said to know the world. Then he didn't know *me*. Afraid to trust myself! I might have been afraid to trust *him*, but not myself.

He went away. I was hardly inclined to accept what he said about the Bishop of Gravesend or the apostolic Lord Calborough. Still he spoke with authority and with an air of circumstance. What was that pattering on the glass overhead? Rain, rain coming down in pailfuls. There is a general sauve qui peut from the gardens. They come rushing up the steps, eager, laughing, chattering like monkeys—creatures which, in other respects, some of the men resemble. All, of course, ascend and go pouring into the cave. The bountiful rain, here, is unconsciously one of the faithful friends and servants of the administration. They should put him in their gew-gaw livery—green, gold, and scarlet—in which they dress up their disguised "bullies," who prowl about the room, ready to rush up on the slightest signal of a disturbance. I am almost alone on the terrace—a place of which I am getting tired. "Afraid to trust myself." I can't put that self-sufficient clergyman's speech out of my head. Thus it is with some natures: when they leap to a conclusion, it is always sure to be the meanest one that can present itself.

After all, I have made no *vow*, and am bound by no promise; nor do I, *more than the Bishop of Gravesend or my Lord Calborough*, think it any harm to go through those rooms, or even to linger there for some good object, provided your behaviour is not to be construed into an *endorsement* or approbation of the proceedings. I am no casuist, and there is a good broad band of common sense, I flatter myself, running through my composition. I would not be tied down, as a weaker mind, by an abstract adherence to the mere *letter* of a resolution; I would look entirely to the spirit; and therefore, to assert this principle, I rise from my solitude on the terrace and walk into the cave. I wish to find Grainger.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER VII. A NEW FRIEND.

WHEN they stood in the street, with the fresh night wind blowing upon them, the old man stopped, and, peering anxiously into his companion's face, said, abruptly, "Better?"

"Much better, thank you; quite well, in fact. There's no occasion for me to trouble you any more; I——"

"What? All gaff—eh? Old Jack Byrne sold—eh? Swallowed his brandy, and want to cut? Is that the caper?"

"I beg your pardon, I don't quite clearly understand you, I'm sorry to say"—for Walter knew by the tone of his voice that the old man was annoyed—"I'm very weak, and rather stupid—I mean to say in—in the ways and the talk of London—and I don't clearly follow what you said to me just now; only you were so kind to me at first, that——"

"Provinces!" muttered the old man to himself. "Just like me; treating him to my pavement patter, and thinking he understood it! All right, I think, as far as one can judge; though God knows that's often wrong enough!" Then, aloud, "Kind! nonsense! I'm an odd old skittle, and talk an odd language; but I've seen the ups and downs of life, my lad, and can give you good advice if I can't give anything else. Have you anything to do to-night? Nothing? Sure I'm not keeping you from the opera or any swell party in Park-lane? No! Then come home with me and have a bit o' pickled salmon and a glass of cold gin-and-water, and let's talk matters out."

Before he had concluded his sentence, the old man had slipped Joyce's arm through his own, and was making off at a great rate and also with an extraordinary shamble, in which his shoulder appeared to act as a kind of cutwater, while his legs followed considerably in the rear. Walter held on to him as best he could, and in this fashion they made their way through the back streets, across St. Martin's-lane, and so into Leicester-square. Then, as they arrived in front of a brilliantly lighted establishment, at the door of which cabs laden with fashionably dressed men and gaudily dressed women were continually disgorging their loads, while a never ceasing stream of pedestrians poured in from the street, Jack Byrne came to a sudden halt, and said to his companion, "Now I'm going to enjoy myself!"

Walter Joyce had noticed the style of people pouring in through the turnstiles and paying their admission money at the brilliantly lit boxes; and as he heard these words he unconsciously drew back. You see he was but a country-bred young man, and had not yet been initiated into the classical enjoyments of London life. Jack Byrne felt the tug at his arm, and looked at him curiously. "What is it?" said he. "You thought I was going in there? I? Oh, my dear young friend, you'll have to learn a great deal yet; but you're on the suspicious lay, and that's a chalk to you! You thought I'd hocussed the brandy I gave you at Bliffkins's; you thought I was going to take you into this devil's crib, did you? Not I, my dear boy; I'd as soon take you in as myself, and that's saying a good deal. No; I told you I was going to enjoy myself—so I am. My enjoyment is in watching that door, and marking those who go through it—not in speculating on what's going on inside, but in waiting for

the end, my young friend—in waiting for the end! Oh, yes, jump out of your brougham, my Lord Tournoddy; but don't split your lavender gloves in attempting to close the door behind you—the cad will do that, of course! Beautiful linen, white as snow, and hair all stuck close to his head, look; but mark his forehead—what's your name? — Joyce? Mark his forehead, Joyce; see how it slopes straight away back. Look at that noble space between his nose and his upper lip—the ape type, my friend—the ape type! That's one of your hereditary rulers, Joyce, my boy! That fellow sits and votes for you and me, bless him! He's gone in now to improve his mind with the literature of comic songs, and the legs of the ballet, and the fascinations of painted Jezebels, and to clear his brain with drinks of turpentine and logwood shavings! And that's one of our hereditary legislators! Oh, Lord, how much longer—how much longer!"

The policeman on duty at the door, whose duty it was to keep the pathway clear, now sallied forth from the portico and promenaded in the little crowd, gently pushing his way amongst them with a monotonous cry of "Move on there, please —move on!" Joyce noticed that his companion regarded this policeman with a half defiant, half pitying air, and the old man said to him, as they resumed their walk, "That's another of the effects of our blessed civilisation!—that gawk in blucher boots and a felt helmet—that machine in a shoddy great coat, who can scarcely tell B from a bull's foot, and yet has the power to tell you and me and other men, who pay for the paving rate—ay, and for the support of such scum as he is, for the matter of that—to move on! Suppose you think I'm a rum 'un, eh?" said Mr. Byrne, suddenly changing his voice of disgust into a bantering tone. "Not seen many like me before; don't want to see any more, perhaps?"

"I don't say that," said Joyce, with a half smile; "but I confess the sentiments are new to me, and——"

"Brought up in the country, my lord or the squire, eh? So pleased to receive notice coming out of church, 'plucks the slavish hat from the villager's head,' and all that! Sorry I've not a manorial hall to ask you into, but such as it is you're welcome. Hold hard, here!"

The old man stopped before a private door in a small street of very small shops running between Leicester-square and the Haymarket, took out a key, and stood back for his companion to pass before him into a dark and narrow passage. When the door was closed behind him, Mr. Byrne struck a light, and commenced making his way up the narrow staircase. Joyce followed him flight after flight, and past landing after landing, until at length the top story was reached. Then Mr. Byrne took out another key, and, unlocking the door immediately in front of him, entered the room, and bade his companion follow him.

Walter Joyce found himself in a long low room, with a truckle bed in one corner, bookshelves ranged round three sides, and in the middle, over which the curtains were now drawn, a large square table, with an array of knives and scissors upon it, a heap of wool in one corner, and an open case of needles of various kinds, polished bright and shining. On one end of the mantelpiece stood a glass case containing a short-horned white owl, stuffed, and looking wonderfully sagacious; on the other a cock, with full crop and beady eye, and open bill, with one leg advanced, full of self-sufficiency and conceit. Over the mantelpiece, in a long low case, was an admirably carried out bit of Byrne's art, representing the death-struggles of a heron struck by a hawk. Both birds were stuffed, of course, but the characteristics of each had been excellently preserved; the delicate heron lay completely at the mercy of his active little antagonist, whose "pounce" had evidently just been made, and who with beak and talons was settling his prey.

While Joyce was looking round at these things, the old man had lit a lamp suspended from the ceiling, and another standing on the square work-table; had opened a cupboard, and from it had produced a black bottle, two tumblers, and a decanter of water; had filled and lit a mighty pipe, and had motioned his companion to make free with the liquor and with the contents of an ancient-looking tobacco jar, which he pushed towards him.

"Smoke, man!" said he, puffing out a thin line of vapour through his almost closed lips, and fanning it away lazily with his hand — "smoke! — that's one thing they can't keep from us, though they'd like. My lord should puff at his Havannah while the commonalty, the plebs, the profanum vulgus, who are hated and driven away, should 'exhale mundungus, ill-perfuming weed!' Thank God we've altered all that since poor Ambrose Phillips's day; he'd get better change for his Splendid

Shilling now than ever he did in his time. Eh? Talking Greek to you, am I, or worse than Greek, for that you'd understand, I dare say, and you'll never understand my old mutterings and croakings. You can read Greek?"

"Yes," Joyce said; "I am reckoned a tolerable Grecian."

"Indeed!" said the old man, with a grin; "ah! no doubt you were an honour to your college!"

"Unfortunately," said Walter, "I have never been to college."

"Then your state is the more gracious! By George! I thought I'd picked up with a sucking don, all trencher cap, and second aorist, and Conservative principles, Church and State, a big Bible with a sceptre stretched across it, and a fear of the 'Swart mechanics' bloody thumbs' printed off on my lord's furniture, as provided by Messrs. Jackson and Graham! You don't follow me, young fellow? Like enough, like enough. I think myself I'm a little enigmatical when I get on my hobby, and it requires a good steady stare of honest wonderment, such as I see on your face now, to bring me up short. I'm brought up short now, and can attend to more sublunary matters, such as yours. Tell me about yourself."

"What shall I tell you?" asked Joyce. "I can tell nothing beyond what you already know, or can guess. I'm without friends, without work, I've lost hope——"

"No, no, my boy! not lost, only mislaid it. We never lose hope so long as we're good for anything! Sometimes, when I've been most depressed and down, about the only thing in life that has any interest for me now,—and you've no idea what that is, have you, Joyce, eh?"

"No, indeed; unless, perhaps, your children!"

"Children! Thank God I never had a wife or a child to give me a care! No; the People's cause, my boy, the people's cause! That's what I live for; and sometimes, as I've been saying, I've been downhearted about that. I've seen the blood beating us down on the one side, and the money beating us down on the other, and I've thought that it was useless kicking against the pricks, and that we had better cave in and give up!"

"But you say you never lost hope?"

"Never, entirely! When I've been at my lowest ebb, when I've come home here with the blood in my veins tingling from aristocratic insult, and with worse than that, contempt for my own fellow working men surging up in my heart, I've looked up at that case there over the mantelshelf, and my pluck's revived! That's a fine bit of work that is, done by an old pupil of mine, who worked his soul out in the People's cause in '48, and died in a deep decline soon after. But what a fancy the lad had! Look at that heron! Is not it for all the world like one of your long, limp, yaw-yaw, nothing-knowing, nothing-doing young swells? Don't you read 'used-up' in his delicate plumage, drooping wings, lack-lustre eye? And remark how the jolly little hawk has got him! No breed about him, keen of sight, swift of wing, active with beak and talon—that's all he can boast of, but he's got the swell in his grip, mind you! And he's only a prototype of what's to come!"

The old man rose as he spoke, and taking the lamp from the table, raised it towards the glass case. As he set it down again he looked earnestly at Joyce, and said: "You think I'm off my head, perhaps—and I'm not sure that I'm not when I get upon this topic—and you're thinking that at the first convenient opportunity you'll slip away, with a 'Thank ye!' and leave the old lunatic to his democratic ravings? But, like many other lunatics, I'm only mad on one subject, and when that isn't mentioned I can converse tolerably rationally, can perhaps even be of some use in advising one friendless and destitute. And you, you say, are both."

"I am, indeed! but I scarcely think you can help me, Mr. Byrne, though I don't for an instant doubt your friendship or your wish to be of service. But it happens that the only people from whom I can hope to get anything in the way of employment, employment that brings money, belong to that class against which you have such violent antipathies, the—the 'swells,' as you call them."

"My dear young fellow, you mistake me! If you do as I should like you, as an honest Englishman with a freeman's birthright, to do, if you do as I myself—old Jack Byrne, one of the prisoners of '48, 'Bitter Byrne,' as they call me at the club—if you do as I do, you'll hate the swells with all your heart, but you'll use 'em! When I was a young man, young and foolish, blind and headstrong, as all young men are, I wouldn't take off my cap to a swell, wouldn't take a swell's orders, wouldn't touch a swell's money! Lord bless you, I saw the folly of that years ago! I

should have been starved long since if I hadn't. My business is bird-stuffing, as you may have heard or guessed, and where should I have been if I'd had to live upon all the orders for bird-stuffing I got from the labouring classes? They can't stuff themselves enough, let alone their birds! The swells want owls, and hawks, and pheasants, and what not stuffed with outspread wings for fire-screens, but the poor people want the fire itself, and want it so badly that they never hollow for screens, and wouldn't use 'em if they had 'em. No, no; hate the swells, my boy, but use 'em. What have you been?"

"An usher in a school!"

"Of course! I guessed it would be some of those delightful occupations for which the supply is unlimited and the demand nothing, but I scarcely thought it could be so bad as that! Usher in a school! hewer in a coal-pit, stone-breaker on a country road, horse in a mill, anything better than that!"

"What could I do?"

"What could you do? Sell your books, pawn your watch, take a steerage passage and go out to Australia. Black boots, tend sheep, be cad to an omnibus, or shopwalker to a store out there, every one of 'em better than dragging on in the conventional torture of this played-out staggering old country! That's a little gassy you'll think, and so it is, but I mean better than that. I've long-standing and intimate connexions with the Zoological Acclimatisation Society in Melbourne, and, if you can pay your passage out, I'll guarantee that in the introductions I give you, they'll find you something to do. If you *can't* find the money for your passage out, perhaps it can be found for you!"

Not since James Ashurst's death, not for some weeks before that event indeed, when the stricken man had taken leave of his old pupil and friend, had Walter Joyce heard the words of friendship and kindness from any man. Perhaps, a little unmanned by the disappointment and humiliation he had undergone since his arrival in London, he was a little unmanned at this speech from his newly found friend; at all events the tears stood in his eyes, and his voice was husky, as he replied:

"I ought to be very much obliged to you, and indeed, indeed I am! but I fear you'll think me an ungrateful cub when I tell you that I can't possibly go away from England. Possibly is a strong word, but I mean, that I can't think of it until I've exhausted every means, every chance of obtaining the barest livelihood here!"

The old man eyed him from under his bent brows earnestly for a moment, and then said abruptly. "Ties, eh? father?"

"No!" said Joyce, with a half blush—very young, you see, and country bred—"as both my mother and father are dead, but—but there is——"

"Oh Lord!" grunted Mr. Byrne; "of course there is, there always is in such cases! Blind old bat I was not to see it at first! Ah, she was left lamenting, and all the rest of it, quite knocks the Australian idea on the head! Now, let me think what can be done for you here! There's Buncombe and Co., the publishers, want a smart young man, smart and cheap they said in their letter, to contribute to their new Encyclopædia, The Naturalist. That'll be one job for you, though it won't be much."

"But, Mr. Byrne," said Joyce, "I have no knowledge, or very little, of natural history. Certainly not enough to——"

"Just too much to prevent your being too proud to take a hint or two from Goldsmith's Animated Nature, my boy, as he took several from those who preceded him. That, and a German book or two you'll find on the shelves—you understand German? That's right—will help you to all the knowledge Buncombe will require of you, or all they ought to expect for the matter of that, at ten and six the column. You can come here of a morning, you won't interfere with me, and grind away until dark, when we'll have a walk and a talk; you shall tell me all about yourself, and we'll see what more can be done, and then we'll have some food at Bliffkins's and learn all that's going on!"

"I don't know how to thank you," commenced Joyce.

"Then don't attempt to learn!" said the old man. "Does it suit you, as a beginning only, mind! do you agree to try it—we shall do better things yet, I hope; but will you try it?"

"I will indeed! If you only knew——"

"I do! good-night! I got up at daybreak, and ought to have been in bed long since! Good-night!"

Not since he had been in London, had Walter Joyce been so light of heart as when he closed Mr. Byrne's door behind him. Something to do at last! He felt inclined to cry out for joy; he longed for some one to whom he could impart his good fortune.

His good fortune! As he sat upon his wretched bed in his tiny lodging, luxurious words rang in his ears. "And the chance of achieving fame and fortune, keep that in the foreground!" Fame and fortune! And he had been overjoyed because he had obtained a chance of earning a few shillings as a bookseller's hack, a chance for which he was indebted to a handicraftsman. But a poor first step towards fame and fortune, Marian would think! He understood how utter had been her inexperience, and his own; he had learned the wide distance between the fulfilment of such hopes as theirs, and the best of the bare possibilities which the future held for them, and the pain which this knowledge brought him, for the sake of his own share in it, was doubly keen for hers. It was very hard for Walter Joyce to have to suffer the terrible disappointment and disenchantment of experience; but it was far harder for him to have to cause her to share them. Marian would, indeed, think it a "poor first step." He little knew how much more decisive a one she was about to take herself.

THE LAST ASH OF A HOLY FIRE.

A few months ago a petition was presented to the Italian parliament, which, though it concerned a matter of private interest only, and was one in a crowd of many others presenting no features of interest whatever, excited some attention in Italy, and will appear yet more strange and remarkable to English readers. It was the petition of certain members of a family in Sicily, begging that they and their descendants might henceforward be exonerated from a certain payment which they and their forefathers had hitherto been called upon to make every year to the fiscal agents of the government.

The payment in question has been made regularly, ever since the year 1724. In that year, a certain Sister Gertrude, a Benedictine nun, was burned alive for heresy, in the city of Palermo. Now, although the expenses attending this execution were cheerfully supported by the royal exchequer, it was not to be expected that those occasioned by the long previous proceedings before the tribunal of the Holy Inquisition, enormously increased as they were by the obstinacy and perversity of this heretic nun, should be also paid out of the royal funds. Who then was to pay these expenses? If it be a rule of jurisprudence in our own heretical latitudes that the Crown never loses its claims, far more is it utterly out of the question in orthodox Catholic lands that Mother Church should lose any portion of her dues, rights, and profits! And on this occasion the Holy Inquisition had worked so hard, and so assiduously during so long a time! Who was to pay for all this? The family of the heretic nun were condemned to pay the costs of her trial. But all that the unhappy family of the nun possessed in the world, was far from sufficient to pay the charges of the Holy Office for condemning its heretic daughter to the flames. Under these circumstances a paternal government came to the rescue, paid the money down, and decreed that the family should pay so much a year to the royal exchequer for ever after!

This was the payment from which the descendants of the family of that unhappy and troublesome Sister Gertrude, now sought, in the year of grace 1868, to be relieved, after a hundred and forty-four years, during which it had been regularly and annually made.

The Italian parliament is not without its fair proportion of members whose notions of human policy may be summed up in the well-known formula of the drill-sergeant, "*Be us you was!*" and it is perhaps strange that on the presentation of this petition no honourable member rose in his place to point out the demoralising effects that would follow in a secluded and religious little community in the Sicilian highlands, from destroying the above record of a great and salutary example. But the tide of public opinion is running rather strong just at present against Rome and its ways and works; and no one was found to gainsay the petition of the long-suffering Calatanisettan family.

The one or two papers which noticed the incident, said that the petition proceeded from a family of Palermo. But this was an error. The family of Sister Gertrude belong to Calatanisetta, a little inland townlet among the mountains. It is wonderful enough that the revenue of united and regenerated Italy should have been increased by such a payment for several years. And it would have been more extraordinary still, if the people had belonged to, and the circumstances had happened at, Palermo. It must be supposed that, at Calatanisetta, it is only just beginning to dawn upon the minds of the inhabitants that the government of Victor Emmanuel might be induced to excuse a payment exacted on such grounds. Or perhaps it had been entirely forgotten why this annual charge was made; perhaps it was not until some local antiquary happened to stumble on the history of the matter, that the idea of getting the payment remitted, occurred to the family.

Nevertheless, the deed on account of which this money has been paid yearly for a hundred and forty-four years, was by no means done in a corner. It is duly chronicled by the historians of Sicily and of the kingdom of Naples. It was the subject of a special record and detailed description published at the time (and now become very scarce), which a Bolognese publisher has just reprinted.

From this latter source is taken the following account of a scene that was being enacted in Palermo while George the First was reigning,

and when Newton, Swift, and Fielding were thinking and writing in England!

The narrative was written by Don Antonino Mongitore, a canon of the cathedral of Palermo, one of the most learned men of his time and country. He opens his story thus: "It is beyond doubt that one of the greatest and most invaluable benefits which the Divine Providence has conferred on the kingdom of Sicily, is the sacred tribunal of the Inquisition."

The key-note is thus struck at once; and the reader understands what is to be the tone of the learned and reverend canon's strain. Yet the reader may be somewhat surprised by some of the details of this the last "auto da fè" ever "celebrated" in Sicily.

The historian Colletta, who briefly refers to the incident in the first book of his history, tells us that Fra Romualdo, a lay brother of the Augustines, and Sister Gertrude, a Benedictine nun, fell into the hands of the Inquisition in the year 1699. The friar was accused of "Quietism," "Molinism," and heresy; the nun of "pride, vanity, rashness, and hypocrisy." "Quietism," a form of heresy that we hear much of in the religious history of those days in Spain, Italy, and France, was so called, as is readily understood, from the perfect "quiet" which its professors considered to be the great object of man's religious efforts here below, and which they profess to have attained. The line of thought and speculation which led up to this form of doctrine is curiously similar to that which conducted Eastern philosophers and fanatics to the cultivation of the "Nerbudda." But it is unquestionably true that the professors of this doctrine were led to opinions and practices that would seem to have little connection with "quiet" of any kind, and that were doubtless exceedingly objectionable, by whatever standard of religion or morals judged. "Molinism" was so called from Michele Molinos, a Spanish casuist and speculative moralist, whose doctrines are objectionable enough, even when understood as he would himself have explained them. But his subtle speculations, when taken in hand by monks and nuns of unbounded ignorance—of naturally weak minds, rendered weaker by the life-long habit of referring all notions of right and wrong, not to the dictates of the natural conscience, and the common sense of mankind, but to the abstruse rules of a most intricate casuistry—were sure to lead to a maze of absurdities which really did merit Bridewell and bread and water.

If any reader be curious to see what sort of life and state of things the doctrines of Quietism, thus treated and practised, are likely to produce, he may refer to De Potter's Life (in French) of Scipio Ricci, the reforming Bishop of Pistoia. He will there find a revelation, sworn in evidence, of the interior life of a nunnery, in which all, or almost all the nuns had embraced the doctrines of Quietism under the teaching of the monks of a neighbouring Dominican convent. He will read of the long and arduous efforts of Ricci to put down this nest of abominations—efforts backed up by Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, but which, despite such backing, were fruitless against the persevering counter-efforts of the Jesuits supported by the authority of the Pope.

No doubt this poor daft creature, Sister Gertrude, was "a Quietist" after her fashion. And it is very probable that she may have been guilty of "vaingloriousness, pride, and rashness." But "hypocrisy" was just the one thing of which she assuredly was not guilty, inasmuch as she went to the stake because she would at all costs avow her poor crazy opinions instead of denying or retracting them.

Colletta says simply that both the nun and the friar were mad. And certainly no midsummer madness was ever madder than the trash which they declared themselves to believe, and for obstinately adhering to which they died. But the Inquisitors sent the medical officers of the Holy Office to visit them in their cells, and those enlightened gentlemen felt their pulses, and declared they were of perfectly sound mind—or at all events sound enough to afford the spectacle of an "Act of Faith" to the inhabitants of Palermo.

No word is said by Canon Mongitore, nor, more strangely, by Colletta, to account for the fact that whereas these victims were seized and imprisoned in 1699, they were not executed until the 6th of April, 1724. Their "process" had been brought to an end, and they had been condemned to the stake, long years before. Of course, the suggestion of a writer who considers the establishment of the Inquisition the greatest blessing that Providence has bestowed on Sicily, is to the effect that all this delay was due to the mercy and longsuffering of the Inquisitors, who were all those years labouring to bring about the conversion of the heretics. Those who read his description of the execution of the sentence at last, and his account of all the preparations made to enable all classes of the population to "enjoy"—godere—the spectacle, will feel little doubt that the Inquistors themselves, as well as all the rest of Palermo, were looking forward to the "Act of Faith" as to a treat of which they would not have been baulked on any consideration.

Why was the treat so long delayed? The most probable conjecture is, that the viceroy who preceded him under whose rule the execution took place, was a man of a different stamp, whose permission for the "celebration" could not be obtained. It is certain that a new viceroy began his reign shortly before the execution took place.

"The Sacred Tribunal of the Inquisition in Sicily," says Canon Mongitore, "has the laudable custom of showing from time to time, as occasion may offer, its profitable operation by celebrating a Public Act of Faith," which "is a sketch or rehearsal of the last judgment," celebrated "for the glory of the Holy Faith, for the consolation of the good, the confusion of unbelievers, and the immortal honour of the Holy Inquisition."

The first step was to obtain leave for the treat in contemplation from the sovereign, Charles the Sixth, the third king of Sicily of the name. He writes in Spanish from Prague on the 7th of July, 1723, "not only approving the celebration, but with splendid liberality promising that the royal treasury should supply the expenses necessary for carrying it out with all possible punctuality and splendour."

Then the 6th of April, 1724, is fixed by the Inquisitors as the great day. And Don Francesco Perino, clad in a gown of crimson velvet, and mounted on a horse caparisoned with gold brocaded trappings, and attended by the constables of the senate, all in crimson velvet gowns, and further attended by trumpeters, pipers, drummers, and cymbal-players, is sent to ride through the city and make proclamation of the intended Public Act, with due notice of time and place. He also proclaims the indulgences promised by the Holy Father to all those who shall be present on the occasion. Everybody is invited; "taking note, however, that they are to come in the best clothes that they can wear, in order to appear duly decorated for the great lustre of the occasion, and glory of God."

There is first to be a great procession from the Palace of the Inquisition to the theatre prepared for the celebration of the "Act of Faith," carrying the great "green cross" of the Inquisition, which will be erected on the altar in the theatre on that day, and will remain there all that night in custody of officers of the Inquisition. Special invitations are sent to all the civil and ecclesiastical bodies to take part in the procession. Only to the "barefooted Augustines" no invitation is sent, for "reasons of convenience and propriety," *i.e.*, because the man to be burned was one of their body. Specially the company of "La Vergine Assunta" was invited not only to be present, but to perform their part of the show. They were instituted for the express purpose of endeavouring to save the souls of those condemned by the Inquisition, by convincing them of their errors. The company of the "Assunta" would have been terribly affronted if they had not been duly invited to play their part in the spectacle. They kept twelve theologians specially trained to hunt down heresy into its last retreats. And all of these were brought to bear upon the obstinate heretics, a couple at a time at first, and then as the last hour drew near, all twelve together!

On the following day, the 6th, there is to be another great and solemn procession, on the occasion of bringing the prisoners from the prison of the Inquisition to the theatre. Everybody in Palermo, who had any sort of civil or religious status whatsoever, is to take part in this; a great number of them on horseback, many carrying huge lighted tapers of yellow wax, and all in the fullest of full dress.

Then we have a detailed description of the theatre: not the place where the last scene of all, the actual burning, was to take place, but that in which the reading of the sentences with great pomp, and in the presence of almost all the city, was to be performed. Thence the prisoners were to be taken, with more "pride, pomp, and circumstance," to another spot hard by.

This theatre was erected on a large open space immediately on the south side of the cathedral. Every detail of the construction, with the measurements of every part, is given by Canon Mongitore. We may, however, content ourselves with a general notion of the arrangement and appearance of the whole. In the old book, from which the reprint has been made, and which may still be seen in the Magliabecchian library, there is a large illustration, not reproduced in the reprint.

Supposing a wooden building of vast size to have been raised, much in the form of an ordinary theatre, let the reader represent to himself a huge and lofty throne occupying the centre of what in such a theatre would be the stage. This is for the three Inquisitors, with lower seats by the side of, and beneath it, for their principal officials. A series of compartments, very much in the nature of the boxes in a theatre, but more extensive, occupy the place of the ordinary boxes; except that at one part of the semicircle there is an open space left void, in order to allow a free view of the proceedings to a distinguished portion of the rank and fashion of Palermo, who occupy the balconies and windows of a neighbouring palace. All this range of boxes is assigned to the various public bodies of the city. Two large galleries, however, are set apart, one for the Princess Roecaporita, and one for the Princess Resuttana, and the ladies in great numbers invited by them.

In the middle of the space occupied by the orchestra in theatres destined to less holy purposes, is an isolated stage, high, but of small dimensions. This is to be occupied by the prisoners one at a time. There are twenty-eight of them; but only two are to be burned. The others having abjured their errors, and become reconciled to the Church, are to receive their sentences to minor punishments. These six-and-twenty, of both sexes, are accused, for the most part, of bigamy and fortune-telling; the men mainly of the first; the women of the second, crime. And they are condemned to various terms of seclusion, imprisonment, banishment, forced labour, and in every case to a sort of pillory procession through the city. There is a species of dock at the back part of the pit for all these prisoners, and leading from that to the high stage in the middle of the orchestra is a raised pathway—much like that used by flying-leap performers with the trapeze—along which the criminals are to be brought one by one to take their stand on the high stage, while their crimes are rehearsed and their sentences read. The hero and heroine of the day are reserved to the last; the other twenty-six are evidently regarded by all the assemblage as mere ob-

structions in the way of the real amusement of the occasion.

At the part of the theatre furthest from the stage, in the place where in Continental theatres the royal box is situated, stands the altar, with the great green crucifix of the Inquisition erected on it, and a great display of flowers and wax candles. And on each side of this, are *boxes for the musicians*.

All these constructions are most superbly adorned with all sorts of upholstery—crimson velvet, blue velvet, cloth of gold, brocade, gold lace, and embroidery—in carefully graduated degrees of magnificence, from the plainer seats of the clerks and ushers, to the culmination of gorgeous splendour in the throne of the three Inquisitors. In the midst of all this glow of gold and colour, the box of the prisoners, and the high stage to which they are conducted one by one, are draped with black.

One portion of the edifice thus arranged has not yet been mentioned; but it must by no means be forgotten. Behind each of the various compartments or boxes—that for the Inquisitors, that for the senate, those for the religious corporations, those for the ladies—behind each of them, except indeed the dock of the prisoners, there were large and commodious apartments, in which elegant, and—as Canon Mongitore again and again specially assures us—abundant repasts were served. Thus, after all, the hours occupied in reading the sentences of the minor criminals were not altogether lost; for that was the time of which the gay assemblage of pleasure-seekers availed themselves, for enjoying the good things prepared for them.

Canon Mongitore is very particular in recording who paid for all the feasting. The different banquets, it seems, were provided by different persons. Of course, the Inquisition fed its own members. It also provided, in the most elegant and gallant manner, for one large party of ladies, invited by the wife of the noble selected for the high honour of carrying the great standard of the Inquisition on this occasion. The noble senate provided their own banquet. The viceroy feasted another large party of ladies. The monastic bodies were entertained: some at the cost of their own convents: some at that of the Inquisition.

The first procession on the evening of the 5th of April, came off very successfully: the rather as a great number of the first nobles of the country—all the jeunesse dorée of Palermo—had besought the Inquisition to allow them the signal honour of enrolling themselves among the "familiars" of the Holy Office for the great occasion. Canon Mongitore carefully records all their names. Colletta says that he will abstain from repeating them, because those who bore those names in his day would blush too painfully at the infamy of their progenitors.

This first procession, however, was much less interesting than that which was to take place on the morrow; for the culprits did not appear in it. The terrible green crucifix was carried through the city, and stood all night on the altar in the theatre. And all Palermo was on the tip-toe of suspense and expectation of the morrow.

From the earliest dawn the whole city was afoot, and crowded into the streets and squares through which the procession was to pass. At nine in the morning it began to issue from the palace of the Inquisition; the getting of it into order and the passage of it through the streets was a very long affair, for many thousands of persons took part in it. But the people waited with unwearying patience for the coming of the most interesting part of the show—the criminals. At last they made their appearance: first the penitents, dressed in black, with yellow mitres on their heads, walking one by one; last the two impenitent heretics who were to furnish forth the treat of the day. These last were dressed in garments saturated with pitch, and painted all over with flames. Their mitres were similarly saturated with pitch. On either side of each of them walked a learned theologian, who ceased not, as they walked, to ply them with the most learned arguments and the most pressing exhortations to confess their errors even at that eleventh hour.

Not that it is to be supposed that if either of the unhappy wretches had been frightened into a recantation, Palermo would have been on that occasion deprived of its expected treat; but it would have made all the difference as regarded the prospects of the prisoners after the Inquisition had done its worst upon them. The strenuous efforts made for the saving of their souls were considered quite a feature in the entertainment; and so actively and urgently did the priests on either hand of the prisoners exert themselves that they were completely knocked up before the procession had accomplished half its course, and their places were immediately supplied by two fresh divines, who continued their efforts. But, as Canon Mongitore says despairingly, "all this battering accomplished nothing!"

It was between eleven and twelve, when the different bodies who had taken part in the procession, found themselves arranged in their proper places in the theatre. Then the reverend Maestro Pietro Antonio Majorana ascended a pulpit prepared for the purpose, and pronounced a discourse in praise of the Inquisition, especially enlarging on its clemency and mercy, and on the iniquities and enormities of the prisoners condemned to the fire. Canon Mongitore reports this discourse at length.

Then began the reading of the sentences of the twenty-six minor criminals, and everybody made off in the direction of the viands. It was deemed necessary, it would seem, that one Inquisitor should remain in his place during this part of the business. So the Inquisitors took it by turns: two only at a time retiring, for, Canon Mongitore says, "the necessary support of the body."

It was between two and three, when the sentences of the penitent culprits were got through, and the feasted guests hastened back

into the theatre to be present at the more exciting part of the performance.

Sister Gertrude was first made to ascend the high stage in the centre of the theatre. During the reading of her sentence, which lasted half an hour, "bold and unabashed in aspect, mumbling, she vomited forth horrid blasphemies, so that the ushers at her side were obliged to shut her mouth with a gag."

Then the same was done by Fra Romualdo. He, too, showed all the signs of the most hardened impenitence. He did not bow to the crucifix, nor even to the Inquisitors! But it does not seem to have been considered necessary to gag him.

The next thing was to strip the prisoners of their religious habit. For this purpose the pitched and painted garments had to be lifted off them. Then the friar's and nun's dresses were "opprobriously" taken off, and the pitch saturated garments were replaced. The hair of the female prisoner was also saturated with pitch.

Just then, the wretched woman "seemed to give some signs of a disposition to relent." Immediately a theologian of first-rate power was called in haste from a neighbouring monastery of Jesuits, and was closeted with her. But at the end of a very few minutes, he left her, and reported that any apparent movement of penitence on her part had been either momentary or feigned.

Then the sitting in the theatre was at an end. The Inquisitors rose, and returned in carriages provided by the viceroy, to their palace; not to be absent—let it not be supposed for an instant—from the burning, but to change their dresses, and to return forthwith to the Piano di Santo Erasimo, in which the execution was to take place.

There also, scaffoldings and stands had been erected, in such sort as to allow everybody a full and near view of the execution. And the senators and the nobles, and the monks and the friars, and the ladies, all hurried away from the theatre to their places in the plain of Santo Erasimo. And there, again, refreshments—ices, cakes, and so forth—were handed round; for it was now within an hour of sunset; they had been at it all day; and a little more sustentation of the body was necessary for those who were not sustained by the excitement of being about to be burned alive.

From the theatre to the place of execution, each of the two impenitent heretics was carried on a cart drawn by bullocks; standing upright on the cart, tied to a stake securely fixed in the floor of it. The cart carrying Sister Gertrude entered the space railed off in the middle of the large piazza, first. Four theologians got into each cart, two standing on each side of either prisoner, "and all these doctors continued their fervent exhortations and last salutary admonitions unceasingly, during the whole transit."

Think of the horrible falsity, sham, and hollowness of the whole thing! Picture to yourself the figures of those eight learned divines, in their doctors' gowns, with the "azure hat" peculiar to the servants of the Inquisition on their heads, vieing with each other in urgently and with much gesticulation deafening the ears and stunning the minds of the poor wretches about to die in the flames, with voluble trash drawn from the cut-and-dry manuals of their science!

The stake to which each victim was to be bound, was erected on a scaffolding raised a considerable height from the ground. Under this scaffolding, and not around the person of the prisoner, were heaped together the fagots and fuel; an arrangement which secured, both considerable prolongation of the victims' agonies, and a far more complete view of them by the assembled multitude, than the less ingenious method of heaping fagots around the body of the sufferer.

"Then," when Gertrude had ascended the scaffold and been bound to the stake, "the servants and indefatigable priests of the Holy Office opened their last batteries against the hardened heart of the obstinate wretch. And truly it is not possible to describe with the pen how they sweated for her conversion, both coming along in the cart, and on the scaffold in the last moments of her miserable life, in the hope of bringing her to see her errors! But at last, their energies being worn out, and seeing that their exhortations, their labour, and their tears were uselessly poured forth, they were obliged to retire and leave the place to Justice.

"Thereupon they first burned her hair [saturated with pitch, it will be remembered] *to let her feel a small taste of the burning of the fire* [literally word for word], but she showed no more care for her hair than for her soul. Then they set fire to the pitch-soaked outer garment, to try whether the heat of the flames would make her open her eyes. But finding that she was still most obstinate, they set fire to the wood of the furnace underneath, which, burning the planks that supported her, the wretch plunged down into the fire, and was there consumed, and her soul passed from the temporal to the eternal fire."

Then came the bullock-drawn cart bearing the other victim. "But as he was descending from it, the concourse of people who crowded around him was extraordinary. Cavaliers, monks, and people of every condition, showing an immense zeal for his eternal salvation, threw themselves at his knees, and with loving reproaches, and with entreaties, and with acts of profound humiliation on their knees, strove by force of tears to prove their desire for his salvation, imploring him to repent, and to have mercy on his own soul. But they all spoke both with their tongues and with their eyes to one deaf. He remained inflexible, without giving the least sign of repentance or emotion."

"Then he was closely bound to the stake by the executioner. And they set fire to the garment soaked in pitch. Thereupon he made violent struggles to loose himself, and blew at

the fire as the flames burned his face, as though he would have extinguished it. But for all that, the obstinate wretch gave no sign of repentance. Then they set fire to the furnace underneath, and as the flames mounted he made the most frantically violent efforts. But the plank on which he rested was quickly burned, and he fell face foremost into the left hand part of the furnace. And from these flames he passed to try the anguish of the eternal fire!"

And the ladies of Palermo sipped their ices as they watched the scene.

This is the story of the last execution by fire that ever took place in Sicily.

And very strange it is to think, that the great grandfathers and grandmothers of people now living may have been present at it; stranger still, that a portion of the sentence of condemnation which consigned these unfortunates to the flames, should have continued in operation up to the spring of the present year!

SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD.

Gold has been discovered in South Africa, also diamonds worth from twenty to five-hundred pounds.

The writer of this narrative, who lately left the Cape Colony, and while there specially directed his attention to the subject of the gold fields, will endeavour to tell what was known on the subject when he left South Africa.

From Cape Town, the capital of the Colony, to Hope Town, situated on its north-eastern frontier, near where the diamonds before alluded to have been found, is a distance of six hundred miles. To reach Hope Town by bullock waggons would take at least thirty days. Hope Town might, however, be reached in twenty days from Port Elizabeth, a place further eastward, and about four days more distant from England by steam than Cape Town. No other means of transit are available than waggons eighteen feet long, drawn by sixteen oxen, at the rate of twenty miles a day. After crossing the Orange river the explorer still has seven hundred and six miles of country to traverse before he reaches the southern end of the line of gold fields, which do not belong to the Cape, but will eventually form a grand extension of the colony of Natal.

But what ground have we for believing that there really are valuable gold fields in South Africa; and what reason have we to expect that they will prove remunerative? It need hardly be said that waggon loads of gold would be perfectly valueless to a man in the heart of a desolate country, without any means of carrying it to where it can be turned to account. Before twenty-four hours had passed, the possessors would willingly give all for a mutton chop and a glass of water. "What with the gold works of the tract which, I think, really supplied the Ophir of Solomon, and the great coal fields of Natal, South Africa is about to become an El Dorado." These are the words of perhaps the greatest living authority in Europe, to the greatest living authority in South Africa upon the subject. They are words pregnant with hope, but hope still unborn.

The discoverer of the southern gold fields is Herr Mauch, a German traveller of considerable acquirements, connected scientifically with Dr. Petermann of Gotha. He describes himself as perfectly amazed at the immense auriferous wealth spread before him, and believes that the yield will be above that of Australia or California. Specimens of the quartz found by him were forwarded to Port Elizabeth, and tested with very satisfactory results. Herr Mauch was at the time of his discovery accompanied by a celebrated elephant hunter, Mr. Hartly.

These gold fields lie within the territory of a chief called Machien, who has since the discovery of gold proposed to Sir Philip Wodehouse, the governor of the Cape Colony, to transfer the sovereignty of his territory to Great Britain.

The reason why the chief is so ready to make the offer unsolicited, is that his territory lies contiguous to what is called the Transvaal Republic, a colony of disaffected boers who, in consequence of the abolition of slavery in the Cape Colony, parted with their farms, withdrew beyond the boundary, and have more than once been engaged in active hostility against the crown. They have, whether wisely or not, been recognised as an independent state; and their numbers are recruited by adventurers from other parts.

The Transvaal Republic is the refuge of every miscreant who finds the Cape Colony too hot to hold him. It is the Alsatia of South Africa; and it is unquestionable that slavery there exists under the mild term of apprenticeship, and in order to obtain "apprentices" the adult aborigines are constantly, under one pretence or another, shot down in cold blood, men and women, and the children carried off as slaves. This proceeding is facetiously called hunting for "black ivory."

No sooner did the Transvaal Republic learn that gold exists in the territories of their neighbours, than their legislators, by a very simple process of enactment, annexed to their own dominions a large slice of land to which they have not the slightest claim, to which their title never has been, and never will be recognised. The chief, Machien, fearing that he will be unable to cope with such unscrupulous adversaries, recruited as they will doubtless still further be by the scum of other parts of the earth, has offered his land to the Queen of England.

The offer of annexation was made by Machien through the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, a missionary resident in those parts, who has added his testimony, in favour of the auriferous wealth of that region, and transmitted to the colony several fine specimens of gold quartz. Some diggers from the Transvaal Republic are already at work.

Attention having thus been directed to the

subject, and the writers of more ancient date consulted, it appears that from a remote period of antiquity until a time comparatively recent, all the east coast of Africa between Abyssinia and the confines of the Cape Colony has been regarded as rich in gold. Not only did Heber use no poet's licence when he said "Where Afric's sunny fountains roll down their golden sands;" but Livingstone speaks of the practice of gold washing in the rivers. It appears that when a native discovers a particle of gold larger than usual, he carefully replaces it where he found it, believing it to be the seed of gold.

The southern gold fields are believed to be about sixty miles long and twenty broad. The extent of the northern, which lie near the Zambesi river, is not yet equally well determined; but traces of gold have been found nearer the Cape Colony.

On the receipt of Machien's proposal of annexation, which the Governor of the Cape was not in a position to accede to, without authority from home, his excellency submitted to the Cape parliament a proposal to send an exploring party to investigate the matter; to determine the best route; and to ascertain what were the facilities for procuring food and water. The parliament at once voted a sum of money for the purpose; and when the writer left the colony affairs were in progress for carrying out the designs. Meanwhile, private parties were already forming for reaching the gold fields, and various suggestions as to the best route appeared in print.

Some advocated their approach from the western coast, from a spot called Waalfisch, or Walich Bay; this would mean a somewhat long voyage by sea, and a still longer and much more precarious journey over land, for the gold fields lie nearer the eastern than the western coast of Africa; while Walich Bay is on the west coast. As, however, a party was forming to adopt that route, it is to be presumed that the originators of the plan had good reason for pursuing this course. Some, again, advocate the line through the Cape Colony by Hope Town, on its frontiers, thence skirting the western boundary of the Transvaal Republic by the mission station of Kuruman and Kolobeny, into Machien's territory. Others propose to start from Port Natal, and to pursue a north-western course; and a fourth class, believing that the Transvaal boers, in spite of their rowdyism and hatred of the English, would still be sufficiently alive to their own interest to further the attempt to pass through their land, advocate the adoption of that route. The man of all others best able to form a judgment, in the absence of Dr. Livingstone, one who though never actually on the spot, has been in constant communication with the great traveller, is of opinion, that the proper route will be by the Zambesi; and that in spite of the difficulty of landing at the mouth of that river, and the malaria so fatal along part of the banks, it will be better to face these perils and make a rush to the northern fields, which are not far from the Victoria falls, than to traverse the deserts from the Cape, and to risk annoyance from Kaffir chiefs and unruly boers.

THE POET.

HIMSELF.

"WHO is this?" said the Moon
To the rolling Sea,
"That wanders so sadly, madly, and gladly,
Looking at thee and me?"

Said the Sea to the Moon,
"'Tis right you should know it,
This wise good man
Is a wit and a poet;
But he earns not, and cannot,
His daily bread,
So he'll die
By-and-by,
And they'll raise a big monument
Over his head!"

Said the bonnie round Moon to the beautiful Sea,
"What fools the men of your Earth must be!"

HIS CRITIC.

WHAT knows the critic of the book?
As much, it may be, as the rook,
Perched on the high cathedral tower,
Knows of the solemn organ's power
That heaves below with tides of sound,
Ebbing and flowing all around.
As much, it may be, as at Rome,
The fly upon St. Peter's dome
Knows of the architect's design,
Who planned and built that fane divine.
As much, perchance, if truth were said,
As the hat upon the critic's head
Knows of the critic's rule or plan,
Or whether he is ass or man!

HIS DREAM OF HIS POEMS.

'TWAS in the starry midnight,
The wind was whirling low,
And the tall beech trees replying,
As it rocked them to and fro,
When half awake, half sleeping,
I thought that I was dead,
And floated to the gates of Heaven,
With angels at my head.

Angels; ah, well I knew them!
Pleasant, and fair, and kind;
Things of my own creation,
And children of my mind.
I looked upon their faces,
And on their sunny wings;
Their eyes as bright as morning,
Their breath like balm of springs.

And some of them were smiling
Like innocence when glad;
And some were grave and pensive,
With tearful eyes and sad.
But all of them were lovely;
They were no more than seven;
And they floated me and wafted me,
And carried me to Heaven.

"And are ye *all?*" I whispered,
Betwixt a smile and tear,
"Out of a thousand, only seven,
To make my light appear?
Out of a thousand, only seven,
To shine about my name,
And give me what I died for,
The heritage of fame?"

"Hush!" said a stately angel,
Responsive to my thought,
"We're all that future times shall know
Of what your hand hath wrought;
Your gay green leaves, and flowers of song,
You've flung them forth, broad-cast;
But like the bloom of parted years,
They've gone into the past.

"But we, though no one knows us,
Shall echo back your tones
As long as England's speech shall run
The circuit of the zones.
Think not your fate unhappy!
To live to future time,
In noble thoughts and noble words,
Is destiny sublime."

"Angels of grace and beauty;"
I rubbed mine eyes and sighed—
A dream! a dream! a pleasant dream!
Of vanity and pride.
A sleeping thought! A waking doubt!
If only *one*—not seven—
Of all my rhymes be doomed to live,
Earth shall be part of Heaven.

NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES.

By Charles Dickens.

A LITTLE DINNER IN AN HOUR.

It fell out on a day in this last autumn that I had to go down from London to a place of sea-side resort, on an hour's business, accompanied by my esteemed friend Bullfinch. Let the place of sea-side resort be, for the nonce, called Namelesston.

I had been loitering about Paris in very hot weather, pleasantly breakfasting in the open air in the garden of the Palais Royal or the Tuileries, pleasantly dining in the open air in the Elysian Fields, pleasantly taking my cigar and lemonade in the open air on the Italian Boulevard towards the small hours after midnight. Bullfinch—an excellent man of business—had summoned me back across the channel, to transact this said hour's business at Namelesston, and thus it fell out that Bullfinch and I were in a railway carriage together on our way to Namelesston, each with his return ticket in his waistcoat pocket.

Says Bullfinch: "I have a proposal to make. Let us dine at the Temeraire."

I asked Bullfinch, Did he recommend the Temeraire? Inasmuch as I had not been rated on the books of the Temeraire for many years.

Bullfinch declined to accept the responsibility of recommending the Temeraire, but on the whole was rather sanguine about it. He "seemed to remember," Bullfinch said, that he had dined well there. A plain dinner but good. Certainly not like a Parisian dinner (here Bullfinch obviously became the prey of want of confidence), but of its kind very fair.

I appealed to Bullfinch's intimate knowledge of my wants and ways, to decide whether I was usually ready to be pleased with any dinner, or—for the matter of that—with anything, that was fair of its kind and really what it claimed to be. Bullfinch doing me the honour to respond in the affirmative, I agreed to ship myself as an Able Trencherman on board the Temeraire.

"Now, our plan shall be this," says Bullfinch, with his forefinger at his nose. "As soon as we get to Namelesston, we'll drive straight to the Temeraire, and order a little dinner in an hour. And as we shall not have more than enough time in which to dispose of it comfortably, what do you say to giving the house the best opportunities of serving it hot and quickly, by dining in the coffee-room?"

What I had to say was, Certainly. Bullfinch (who is by nature of a hopeful constitution) then began to babble of green geese. But I checked him in that Falstaffian vein, urging considerations of time and cookery.

In due sequence of events, we drove up to the Temeraire and alighted. A youth in livery received us on the doorstep. "Looks well," said Bullfinch, confidentially. And then aloud, "Coffee-room!"

The youth in livery (now perceived to be mouldy) conducted us to the desired haven, and was enjoined by Bullfinch to send the waiter at once, as we wished to order a little dinner in an hour. Then Bullfinch and I waited for the waiter until, the waiter continuing to wait in some unknown and invisible sphere of action, we rang for the waiter: which ring produced the waiter who announced himself as not the waiter who ought to wait upon us, and who didn't wait a moment longer.

So Bullfinch approached the coffee-room door, and melodiously pitching his voice into a bar where two young ladies were keeping the books of the Temeraire, apologetically explained that we wished to order a little dinner in an hour, and that we were debarred from the execution of our inoffensive purpose, by consignment to solitude.

Hereupon one of the young ladies rang a bell which reproduced—at the bar this time—the waiter who was not the waiter who ought to wait upon us; that extraordinary man, whose life seemed consumed in waiting upon people to say that he wouldn't wait upon them, repeated his former protest with great indignation, and retired.

Bullfinch with a fallen countenance was about to say to me "This won't do," when the waiter who ought to wait upon us, left off keeping us waiting at last. "Waiter," said Bullfinch, piteously, "we have been a long time waiting." The waiter who ought to wait upon us, laid the blame upon the waiter who ought not to wait upon us, and said it was all that waiter's fault.

"We wish," said Bullfinch, much depressed, "to order a little dinner in an hour. What can we have?"

"What would you like to have, gentlemen?"

Bullfinch, with extreme mournfulness of speech and action, and with a forlorn old fly-blown bill of fare in his hand which the waiter had given him, and which was a sort of general manuscript Index to any Cookery-Book you please, moved the previous question.

We could have mock-turtle soup, a sole, curry, and roast duck. Agreed. At this table by this window. Punctually in an hour.

I had been feigning to look out of this window; but I had been taking note of the crumbs on all the tables, the dirty tablecloths, the stuffy soupy airless atmosphere, the stale leavings everywhere about, the deep gloom of the waiter who ought to wait upon us, and the stomach-ache with which a lonely traveller at a distant table in a corner was too evidently afflicted. I now pointed out to Bullfinch the alarming circumstance that this traveller had *dined*. We hurriedly debated whether, without infringement of good breeding, we could ask him to disclose if he had partaken of mock-turtle, sole, curry, or roast duck? We decided that the thing could not be politely done, and that we had set our own stomachs on a cast, and they must stand the hazard of the die.

I hold phrenology, within certain limits, to be true; I am much of the same mind as to the subtler expressions of the hand; I hold physiognomy to be infallible; though all these sciences demand rare qualities in the student. But I also hold that there is no more certain index to personal character, than the condition of a set of casters is to the character of any hotel. Knowing and having often tested this theory of mine, Bullfinch resigned himself to the worst, when, laying aside any remaining veil of disguise, I held up before him in succession, the cloudy oil and furry vinegar, the clogged cayenne, the dirty salt, the obscene dregs of soy, and the anchovy sauce in a flannel waistcoat of decomposition.

We went out to transact our business. So inspiriting was the relief of passing into the clean and windy streets of Namelesston from the heavy and vapid closeness of the coffee-room of the Temeraire, that hope began to revive within us. We began to consider that perhaps the lonely traveller had taken physic, or done something injudicious to bring his complaint on. Bullfinch remarked that he thought the waiter who ought to wait upon us, had brightened a little when suggesting curry; and although I knew him to have been at that moment the express image of despair, I allowed myself to become elevated in spirits. As we walked by the softly lapping sea, all the notabilities of Namelesston, who are for ever going up and down with the changelessness of the tides, passed to and fro in procession. Pretty girls on horseback, and with detested riding-masters; pretty girls on foot; mature ladies in hats—spectacled, strongminded, and glaring at the opposite or weaker sex. The Stock Exchange was strongly represented, Jerusalem was strongly represented, the bores of the prosier London clubs were strongly represented. Fortune hunters of all denominations were there, from hirsute insolvency in a curricle, to closely buttoned-up swindlery in doubtful boots, on the sharp look-out for any likely young gentleman disposed to play a game at billiards round the corner. Masters of languages, their lessons finished for the day, were going to their homes out of sight of the sea; mistresses of accomplishments, carrying small portfolios, likewise tripped homeward; pairs of scholastic pupils, two and two, went languidly along the beach, surveying the face of the waters as if waiting for some Ark to come and take them off. Spectres of the George the Fourth days flitted unsteadily among the crowd, bearing the outward semblance of ancient dandies, of every one of whom it might be said, not that he had one leg in the grave, or both legs, but that he was steeped in grave to the summit of his high shirt-collar, and had nothing real about him but his bones. Alone stationary in the midst of all the movement the Namelesston boatmen leaned against the railings and yawned, and looked out to sea, or looked at the moored fishing-boats and at nothing. Such is the unchanging manner of life with this nursery of our hardy seamen, and very dry nurses they are, and always wanting something to drink. The only two nautical

personages detached from the railing, were the two fortunate possessors of the celebrated monstrous unknown barking fish, just caught (frequently just caught off Namelesston), who carried him about in a hamper, and pressed the scientific to look in at the lid.

The sands of the hour had all run out when we got back to the Temeraire. Says Bullfinch then to the youth in livery, with boldness: "Lavatory!"

When we arrived at the family vault with a skylight, which the youth in livery presented as the Institution sought, we had already whisked off our cravats and coats; but finding ourselves in the presence of an evil smell, and no linen but two crumpled towels newly damp from the countenances of two somebody elses, we put on our cravats and coats again, and fled unwashed to the coffee-room.

There, the waiter who ought to wait upon us had set forth our knives and forks and glasses, on the cloth whose dirty acquaintance we had already had the pleasure of making, and whom we were pleased to recognise by the familiar expression of its stains. And now there occurred the truly surprising phenomenon that the waiter who ought not to wait upon us, swooped down upon us, clutched our loaf of bread, and vanished with the same.

Bullfinch with distracted eyes was following this unaccountable figure "out at the portal," like the Ghost in Hamlet, when the waiter who ought to wait upon us jostled against it, carrying a tureen.

"Waiter!" said a severe diner, lately finished, perusing his bill fiercely through his eye-glass.

The waiter put down our tureen on a remote side table, and went to see what was amiss in this new direction.

"This is not right, you know, waiter. Look here. Here's yesterday's sherry, one and eightpence, and here we are again, two shillings. And what does Sixpence mean?"

So far from knowing what sixpence meant, the waiter protested that he didn't know what anything meant. He wiped the perspiration from his clammy brow, and said it was impossible to do it—not particularising what—and the kitchen was so far off.

"Take the bill to the bar, and get it altered," said Mr. Indignation Cocker: so to call him.

The waiter took it, looked intensely at it, didn't seem to like the idea of taking it to the bar, and submitted as a new light upon the case, that perhaps sixpence meant six pence.

"I tell you again," said Mr. Indignation Cocker, "here's yesterday's sherry—can't you see it?—one and eightpence, and here we are again, two shillings. What do you make of one and eightpence and two shillings?"

Totally unable to make anything of one and eightpence and two shillings, the waiter went out to try if anybody else could; merely casting a helpless backward glance at Bullfinch, in acknowledgment of his pathetic entreaties for our soup tureen. After a pause, during which Mr. Indignation Cocker read a newspaper, and coughed defiant coughs, Bullfinch rose to get the tureen, when the waiter reappeared and brought it: dropping Mr. Indignation Cocker's altered bill on Mr. Indignation Cocker's table as he came along.

"It's quite impossible to do it, gentlemen," murmured the waiter; "and the kitchen is so far off."

"Well. You don't keep the house; it's not your fault, we suppose. Bring some sherry."

"Waiter!" From Mr. Indignation Cocker, with a new and burning sense of injury upon him.

The waiter, arrested on his way to our sherry, stopped short, and came back to see what was wrong now.

"Will you look here? This is worse than before. *Do* you understand? Here's yesterday's sherry one and eightpence, and here we are again two shillings. And what the devil does Ninepence mean?"

This new portent utterly confounded the waiter. He wrung his napkin, and mutely appealed to the ceiling.

"Waiter, fetch that sherry," says Bullfinch, in open wrath and revolt.

"I want to know," persisted Mr. Indignation Cocker, "the meaning of Ninepence. I want to know the meaning of sherry one and eightpence yesterday, and of here we are again two shillings. Send somebody."

The distracted waiter got out of the room, under pretext of sending somebody, and by that means got our wine. But the instant he appeared with our decanter, Mr. Indignation Cocker descended on him again.

"Waiter!"

"You will now have the goodness to attend to our dinner, waiter," says Bullfinch, sternly.

"I am very sorry, but it's quite impos-

sible to do it, gentlemen," pleaded the waiter; "and the kitchen——"

"Waiter!" said Mr. Indignation Cocker. —"Is," resumed the waiter, "so far off, that——"

"Waiter!" persisted Mr. Indignation Cocker, "send somebody."

We were not without our fears that the waiter rushed out to hang himself, and we were much relieved by his fetching somebody—in gracefully flowing skirts and with a waist—who very soon settled Mr. Indignation Cocker's business.

"Oh!" said Mr. Cocker, with his fire surprisingly quenched by this apparition. "I wished to ask about this bill of mine, because it appears to me that there's a little mistake here. Let me show you. Here's yesterday's sherry one and eightpence, and here we are again two shillings. And how do you explain Ninepence?"

However it was explained in tones too soft to be overheard, Mr. Cocker was heard to say nothing more than "Ah-h-h! Indeed! Thank you! Yes," and shortly afterwards went out, a milder man.

The lonely traveller with the stomach-ache had all this time suffered severely; drawing up a leg now and then, and sipping hot brandy and water with grated ginger in it. When we tasted our (very) mock turtle soup, and were instantly seized with symptoms of some disorder simulating apoplexy, and occasioned by the surcharge of the nose and brain with lukewarm dish-water holding in solution sour flour, poisonous condiments, and (say) seventy-five per cent of miscellaneous kitchen stuff rolled into balls, we were inclined to trace his disorder to that source. On the other hand, there was a silent anguish upon him too strongly resembling the results established within ourselves by the sherry, to be discarded from alarmed consideration. Again: we observed him, with terror, to be much overcome by our sole's being aired in a temporary retreat close to him, while the waiter went out (as we conceived) to see his friends. And when the curry made its appearance he suddenly retired in great disorder.

In fine, for the uneatable part of this little dinner (as contradistinguished from the undrinkable) we paid only seven shillings and sixpence each. And Bullfinch and I agreed unanimously, that no such ill-served, ill-appointed, ill-cooked, nasty little dinner could be got for the money anywhere else under the sun. With that comfort to our backs, we turned them on the dear old Temeraire, the charging Temeraire, and resolved (in the Scottish dialect) to gang nae mair to the flabby Temeraire.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. BEDFONT TO WINDSOR.

High and swift up in the soft blue air the crow passes over Middlesex, which spreads below, a great brown and green carpet of dark plough-land and bright pasture, through which the Thames winds like a tangled silver thread. Down from the clouds like a black flake he will drift to any village in his way that has a legend, any town that has a tradition, any old house over whose chimney he passes, if it has been consecrated by genius, or is associated with any passage of human nature that addresses itself to the human heart. Quickly he will drop from the nearest white snow-ball of cloud wherever he can find food. His scent will be keen for old legend and odd biographical incident. He will peer round for a moment, peck an instant, and mount again. His course is to be straight, swift, and westward to the sea.

He does not alight at Bedfont, but still he poises his jetty wings over the red roofs of the old posting village. There, Hood placed the scene of that quaint and grave little poem of his, "The Two Peacocks of Bedfont;" so simple and so touching a little homily against vanity and containing that exquisite couplet:

> And in the garden plot from day to day
> The lily blooms its long white life away.

The poem seems to have arisen from the poet having one day seen two peacocks strutting in flaunting pride, and displaying their jewelled plumes among the humble grassy graves of Bedfont churchyard. This contrast he surrounded with Stothard-like pictures of a country Sunday; hand-coupled urchins in restrained talk, anxious pedagogue, pompous churchwarden stalking solemnly along, gold-bedizened beadle passing flaming through the churchyard gate, terribly conscious of the world's approval, and

> Gentle peasant, clad in buff and green,
> Like a meek cowslip in the spring serene.

The musing poet little thought of what Bedfont used to be in the regency times, when the Four-in-Hand Club's vehicles rattled up to the Black Dog, or whatever the chief inn then was, on their way from their rendezvous in George-street, Hanover-square, to the Windmill, at Salt-hill. Those were the days when baronets drove coaches, boxed the watch, smote the Charlies, wore many-caped coats, and were sudden and prompt in quarrel. Lord Sefton's and Colonel Berkeley's turn-outs were specially superb, the horses perfect, the equipments in refined taste. One rule of the club was that no coach should pass another, and that the pace should never exceed a trot. The society lasted in full vigour for upwards of twenty years. Mr. Akers, one of the most spirited members, in his enthusiastic desire to resemble a regular real

coachman, filed a chink between his front teeth, to enable him to whistle to his nags in the orthodox manner. It was not a very high ambition, but it led Mr. Akers to a coach-box, and left him there firmly planted.

Up in the air again the crow darts, and a few quick pulses of his coal black wings bring him to Staines. Antiquaries derive the name of the town from a stone which marked the western bounds of the jurisdiction of the Corporation of London. Lord mayors and aldermen of old times used to make great days of the swan-upping, coming in gay barges on an August afternoon past Staines to their annual dinner at Medmenham. The Thames swans are chiefly the property of the Dyers' and Vintners' Companies. The birds build in the eyots about Hurley, and in the osier beds by the river, and firm structures of twigs cradle their huge eggs. The keepers receive a small sum for every cygnet that is reared, and it is their duty to guard the eggs, and to build the foundations of the nests. The mark of the Vintners' Company is two nicks, which mark originated the well known sign of the swan with two necks, or nicks. The upping used to begin on the Monday after Saint Peter's day.

Now the crow skims on his glossy wings to that little island meadow on the Thames where King John signed Magna Charta, forced by his barons, who had gathered together at Hounslow, under pretence of a tournament. There were first pronounced those memorable words:

"*No free man shall be apprehended, imprisoned, disseised, outlawed, banished, or in any way destroyed; nor will we go upon him, nor will we send upon him, excepting by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. To no man will we sell, to no man will we deny or delay right and justice.*"

O high Court of Chancery! O patient and suffering suitors! O grimy law-haunted houses, dumb and blind in the midst of crowded streets, see how well our kings or nobles have obeyed this solemn clause! Lawyers, pay a pilgrimage to the green race meadow near Egham and repent of your sins and the shortcomings of tardy justice. That meeting at Runnymede ended as it began, with a tournament. In less than a year the faithless king had broken all his promises, and Louis of France had landed at Dover as the ally of the barons.

From Runnymede to the royal battlements of the "proud keep of Windsor," is but a short flight for the crow. The very prettiest legend about Windsor is connected with the little garden at the foot of the proud tower on which the crow first alights, and from which twelve tributary counties can be seen in clear weather. A young Scotch prince, sent to France to be out of the way of his dangerous uncle, the Duke of Albany, was captured off the coast of Norfolk, and sent to Windsor, where he remained a prisoner eighteen years. In his poem, the King's Quaire, the prince has described how he fell in love with Lady Jane Beaufort, as she walked in this garden, unconscious of the admiration of the young prisoner. The garden, he says, had an arbour in the corner, and was railed in with wands and close-knit hawthorn bushes; and in the midst of every arbour was "a sharp, green, sweet juniper." Suddenly, the prisoner's eyes fell on

> The fairest or the freshest young flower,
> That ever I saw methought before that hour,
> For which sudden abate anon astart
> The blood of all my body to my heart.

Then the enraptured man describes the dress of the maiden; her golden hair fretted with pearls and fiery rubies, emeralds, and sapphires; on her head a chaplet of plumes, red, white, and blue, mixed with quaking spangles; about her neck a fine gold chain, with a ruby in the shape of a heart:

> That as a spark of fire so wantonly
> Seemed burning upon her white throat.

But suddenly, the fair fresh face passed under the boughs, out of sight, and then began the lover's torments, and his day darkened into night. Altogether, a prettier love story is not to be found in all the Castle history. James eventually married this incomparable lady, niece of the cardinal, and daughter of the Earl of Somerset, and took her back with him to Scotland. The accomplished prince was assassinated at Perth in 1437.

At the old deanery door, took place the parting between Richard the Second and his young Queen Isabella, then only eleven years of age. Froissart says, when the canons had chanted very sweetly, the king having made his offerings, he took the queen in his arms and kissed her twelve or thirteen times, saying, sorrowfully, "Adieu, madame, until we meet again." Then the queen began to weep, saying: "Alas, my lord, will you leave me here?" The king's eyes filled with tears, and he said: "By no means, Mamie; but I will go first, and you, ma chère, shall come afterwards." After that, the king and queen partook of wine and comfits at the deanery, with their court. Then the king stooped down and lifted the queen in his arms, and kissed her at least ten times, saying: "Adieu, ma chère, until we meet again," and placing her on the ground, kissed her again. "By our Lady," adds the chronicler, "I never saw so great a lord make so much of, or show such affection to, a lady, as did King Richard to his queen. Great pity it was they separated, for they never saw each other more." Soon afterwards came the death struggle at Pontefract, and the child became a widow.

It was in St. George's Chapel that, in 1813, the body of King Charles the First was discovered. Charles the Second had pretended to search for it, but probably did not wish to find it or to incur the cost of a sumptuous monument. The corpse had been carried to the grave in 1648, in a snow storm, and the dead monarch obtained secretly the name of "the white king" among his adherents, from the fact of the snow that day settling upon the pall. There was no service read over the body, as the

Puritan governor forbade Bishop Prescott to use the Church of England prayers. On the coffin being opened, the face was found dark and discoloured, the forehead and mouth had little of their muscular substance remaining, the cartilage of the nose was gone, but the left eye, though open and full at the first exposure, vanished almost immediately. The shape of the face was long, the nearly black hair was thick at the back of the head; the beard was a reddish brown. On examining the head, the muscles of the neck showed contraction, and the fourth cervical vertebra had been cut through transversely, leaving the severed surfaces smooth and even. The appearance was such as a blow from a heavy axe would have produced. In this chapel, sleep many kings and queens; Jane Seymour among them, and Henry the Eighth, by his own desire "near his true and loving wife, Queen Jane." The gigantic tomb, with six hundred and thirty-four statues and forty-four "historics," which the tyrant ordered, was never put up. His subjects had better things to think of.

Old King George's memory is held dear at Windsor. Thousands of honest old stories of him circulate in the neighbourhood, all showing what a dull, respectable, methodical, worthy, tiresome old fellow he was. He rose at half-past seven, attended service in the chapel, and breakfasted at nine with the queen and the princesses. The meal lasted only half an hour. The princesses were ranged according to the severest etiquette. After breakfast, the king rode out attended by his equerries and his daughters. If the weather were bad he sat within doors and played at chess. He dined at two, the queen and princesses at four. At five the king visited the queen and took a glass of wine and water. He then transacted private business with his secretary. The evening was spent at cards, all visitors retiring when the castle clock struck ten, and always supperless. The royal family separated at eleven o'clock for the night.

We all know from Peter Pindar how the king chattered, asked foolish questions, and answered them himself. His simple adventures are still narrated in many Windsor farms. One day he had to pass a narrow gate, on which a stolid ploughboy sat swinging. "Who are you, boy?" said the king. "I be a pig boy. I be from the low country, and out of work at present." "Don't they want lads here?" asked the king. "I don't know," replied the boy. "All hereabouts belongs to Georgey." "And who is Georgey?" "Georgey! Why, the king; he lives at the castle, but he does no good to me." The king instantly ordered the boy to be employed on his farm, and promised to look after him. He turned out a steady lad. The king once went into a cottage and began turning the meat for an old woman, and was so pleased with himself for doing it, that he left on the rude table five guineas to buy a jack, wrapped in a paper with that notification. There was no pride about him, and he was very kind hearted. Once he and Charlotte met a little boy—"the king's beefeater's little boy." The king said, "Kneel down and kiss the queen's hand." But the boy was obdurate and determined. "No," said he, "I won't kneel, for if I do I shall spoil my new breeches." The king was not so obstinate and pig-headed but that he could bend to common sense sometimes. One day Colonel Price differed with him about cutting down a certain tree which the king thought injured the prospect. "Ay," said the king, pettishly, "that's your way; you continually contradict me." "If your majesty," replied the colonel, "will not condescend to listen to the honest sentiments of your servants, you can never hear the truth." After a short pause the king kindly laid his hand on the colonel's shoulder, and said, "You are right, Price; the tree shall stand." Even when Prince George was a boy, Handel had noticed his fondness for music, and the taste continued till his death. When old, crazed, and blind, he would wander up and down the corridors of Windsor, dressed in a purple dressing gown, his long white beard falling on his breast, and used at lucid intervals to sing a hymn, and accompany himself on the harpsichord. One day towards the end of his life, in a sane moment, the king heard a bell toll. He asked who was dead. He was told it was a Mrs. S. The king had a great memory—memory is almost a royal prerogative—and immediately said: "Ah! She was a linendraper at the corner of —— street. She was a good woman, and brought up her children in the fear of God. She is gone to heaven. I hope I shall soon follow her." Latterly he became impressed with a sense that he was dead, and used to say, "I must have a suit of black in memory of King George the Third, for whom I know there is a general mourning." He would often hold conversation with imaginary noblemen, but the topics to which he referred were always past events. Sometimes he would sit for hours in a torpor, his head resting on both hands; often he would make his servants sit down, and would address them as if he were in parliament.

At last, in 1820, Death came mercifully, and gave the word of release. The lying in state took place in the audience chamber, where the yeomen of the guard stood, their halberts hung with black crape. The coffin was placed beneath a throne hung with black cloth. Two heralds in tabards sat at the foot of the coffin, and the mourners at the head. When all the public had been admitted, the Eton boys were allowed to pass through the rooms. The funeral took place by night, and was magnificent and solemn. The procession was marshalled in St. George's Hall, the Duke of York being chief mourner. About nine o'clock the symphony to the Dead March in Saul reverberated mournfully, the trumpets sounded, and the minute guns thundered. As the coffin passed by, every spectator stood uncovered. The torchlight lit the earnest faces, and gleamed on the towers, pinnacles, and battlements of the castle. A detachment of the Grenadier Guards lined the aisle, their arms and standards re-

versed, and every second man carrying a lighted wax taper. The van was headed by the poor knights and the pages. Then came judges, bishops, privy councillors, and peers. Dukes bore the pall, marquises supported the canopy over the coffin. The national banners were borne by noblemen. The Duke of York followed the coffin, and with him came the Dukes of Clarence, Sussex, and Gloucester, and Prince Leopold. There was thrill of awe when the coffin passed into the vault, and the handful of dust fell and reechoed on the coffin lid. The herald then read the titles of the new king. Le Roi est mort; vive le Roi!

When George the Fourth grew tired of Brighton and afraid of his subjects, he went to live at the royal lodge at the end of the Long Walk. Only a fragment of the lodge now exists, but there at Virginia Water you can still see the Chinese temple, from the gallery of which he used daily to try to amuse himself by angling. He often drove about Windsor Park in his pony-phaeton, or was wheeled in a chair round the improvements at the castle. His last anxiety was about a new dining-room. He maintained his seclusion to the last. His thirty miles of avenues were sacred to himself. If he had even to cross the Frogmore road, some of his suite were sent forward to watch the gates, and observe if the roads were free from danger. The first gentleman in Europe was a miserable man.

From the ruins of the royal cottage, the crow flits back to the terrace. It was here old King George used to show himself, with a simplicity that won the Windsor people. Miss Burney describes one particularly pretty scene. The little Princess Amelia, so beloved by the king, was of the party, "just turned of three years old, in a robe coat covered with fine muslin, a dressed close cap, white gloves, and fan, walking alone and fast, highly delighted at the Windsor uniforms, and turning from side to side to see everybody as they passed, for the terracers always stood up against the walls, to make a clear passage for the royal family."

A flight across the Home Park brings the crow to a bald old oak with a railing round it, in a line with an avenue of elms, and not far from the footpath. That is a sacred tree (if, indeed, the real haunted tree was not accidentally cut down, as some suppose, by George the Third in 1796). Here, most people think that Herne the Hunter used on winter midnights to pace, with rugged horns on his head, shaking his chains, and casting a murrain on cattle. And here Falstaff came disguised, to be fooled, mocked, and pinched, by the mischievous fairies in green. There used to be an old house in Windsor at the foot of the Hundred Steps, supposed to have been the house which Shakespeare sketched as that of Mrs. Page.

Who can now tell the crow as he hovers over the Garter Tower, or flits round the Devil's and King John's Towers, where the first Windsor Castle stood? Some say the castle now in dreamland, stood two miles east of Windsor on the banks of the Thames, where the ancient palace of Edward the Confessor had been before. Here one day at dinner, Earl Goodwin submitted voluntarily to the ordeal of bread. "So may I swallow safe this morsel of bread that I hold in my hand," he said, "as I am guiltless of my brother Alfred's death." He then took the bread, which instantly choked him (so the legend goes on) and being drawn from the table, was conveyed to Winchester and there buried. A blind woodcutter once came here to beseech the sainted king to restore his sight. The king replied, "By our Lady! I shall be grateful if you, through my means, shall choose to take pity upon a wretched creature," and laying his hand on the blind man's eyes, instantly (it is said) restored their sight; the woodman exclaiming, "I see you, O king! I see you, O king!" This absurd custom of "touching" for diseases, continued until Queen Anne's time: to whom Dr. Johnson, when a child, was taken for that purpose. In this same palace in the rough old times, Harold and Tosti, his jealous and choleric brother, fought before King Edward the Confessor. As Harold was about to pledge the king, Tosti seized him by the hair. Harold resenting this—not unnaturally—leaped on Tosti and threw him violently to the ground, but the soldiers parted them. Tosti afterwards joined the Norwegians, invaded Northumberland, and was slain by his brother at Banford Bridge, near York, just as William had landed to render the victory useless.

That same iron-handed Conqueror took a fancy to Windlesdora (the town by the winding river), and first built hunting-lodges in the vales, so as to feast in comfort on the deer he slew; then, exchanging some lands in Essex for it, he acquired the hill above the river, and built a castle there. All English kings have delighted in this palace. Henry the First was married here. Here Henry the Second, bewailing his undutiful children, caused to be painted on a wall, an old eagle with its young ones scratching it, and one pecking out its eyes. "This," he said, "betokens my four sons, which cease not to pursue my death, especially my youngest son, John." From these walls that same John rode sullenly, to his great mortification at Runnymede.

Edward the Third was born here, and from the royal seat derived his appellation of Edward of Windsor. At the foot of the slopes, was the tournament ground, where Edward used to cross spears with Chandos and Manny, and display his shield with the white swan and the defiant motto,

> Hay, hay, the white swan,
> By Godde's soul, I am thy man.

There is no story connected with Windsor Castle more touching than that of the death-bed of Edward's noble-hearted Queen Philippa—the most gentle queen, the most liberal and courteous that ever was, the chroniclers say. When she felt her end approaching, she called to the king, and extending her right hand from under the bed-clothes, placed it in the right hand of the king, who was sorrowful at his heart. Then she said: "Sir, we have in peace, joy, and great prosperity, used all our time to-

gether. Sir, now I pray you that at our parting you will grant me three desires." The king, right sorrowfully weeping, said: "Madam, desire what ye will, I grant it." Then she asked the king, firstly, to pay all merchants on either side the sea, to whom she owed money; secondly, to fulfil all vows that she had made to different churches; and, thirdly, that when God called him hence, he would choose no other tomb but hers, and would lie by her side in the cloisters of Westminster. The king, weeping, said: "Madam, I grant all your desires." Then soon after the good lady made the sign of the cross on her breast, and recommending her youngest son, Thomas, to the king, gave up her spirit: which, says Froissart, "I firmly believe, was caught by the holy angels and carried to the glory of Heaven, for she had never done anything, by thought or deed, that could endanger her losing it. Thus died this queen of England, in the year of grace, 1369, the vigil of the Assumption of the Virgin, on the 15th of August."

Edward partly rebuilt the palace, his wise prelate, William of Wykeham, being the architect. He carved the huge inscription, "Hoc fecit Wykeham," which is still visible on the Winchester Tower; and when the king seemed inclined to resent the apparent arrogance, explained that the inscription meant "the castle had made him." The weak monarch, Henry the Sixth, was also born at Windsor, fulfilling the old prophecy—written probably years after the event:

I, Henry, born at Monmouth,
Shall small time reign and much get,
But Henry of Windsor shall reign long and lose all.

The wicked Crook Back brought Henry's body to Windsor from Chertsey. A black marble slab in the chapel still marks his grave. He became the saint of Windsor. Rough ploughmen from the Berkshire villages came here, with tapers and images of wax; and forest keepers, their doublets stained with deer's blood and often with man's blood, used to adore a small chip of the bedstead of the saintly king, his spur, or his old red velvet hat, which was supposed to cure headaches. Prayers to him were inserted in the service books of the early part of the sixteenth century, and the old hat stood high above all the other Windsor relics.

The Royal Tomb House is another centre of great traditions. It was originally intended by Henry the Seventh for his tomb. Henry the Eighth, in the plenitude of his generosity, gave it to his favourite Wolsey, who began to rebuild it with all the lavish splendour in which he delighted. He had determined to descend into the darkness of a tomb, magnificent as that of the popes, and to lie in a sarcophagus worthy of the Pharaohs. But he begged little earth for charity, far away from that royal tomb, which was swept away in contempt by the Parliamentarians, who loathed such pomps and vanities. The upper part was sold as defaced brass, for six hundred pounds; and the black marble sarcophagus lay untenanted, till it was taken for the righteous purpose of covering Nelson's tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral. George the Third eventually constructed the vault beneath the Tomb House for himself and family.

Windsor Castle possesses two distinct relics of Quentin Matsys, the famous blacksmith of Antwerp. On the left of the altar in St. George's Chapel is a screen of Gothic iron, hammered out (carved out with a knife one would think) by Matsys for the tomb of Edward the Fourth. The king's coat of mail and jewelled surcoat used to hang near it, but the Puritans carried them off when they defaced the chapel in 1643. In the Queen's closet hangs the famous picture of the Misers, which proved Matsys an artist, and obtained him the daughter of a painter for a wife. The painting is hard, but it is of great excellence; and the details are highly curious. The faces are replete with character, but the meaning of their expression is disputed. Some think that both men are money-lenders, rejoicing in an especially hard bargain; many, that one is a merchant, and the other a partner or clerk who is outwitting him. After all, the picture's traditional name probably expresses the real intention.

There is a tradition that the upper ward of Windsor Castle was built by Edward the Third from the French king's ransom, and the lower ward remodelled from the ransom of the Scotch king; John was shut up in the Round Tower, formerly called La Rose, and David in the south-west tower of the upper ward.

Henry the Eighth used to hawk in the Great Park, and there too in the long green glades he held his archery meetings. Years after her father's death, Elizabeth used to come to the park to shoot deer with her cross bow, not unfrequently cutting their throats with her own hunting knife. There is one more tradition of Windsor worth remembering. A public-house in Peascod-street, called the Duke's Head, was once the house of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the Zimri of Dryden. Charles the Second used to come from the Castle, and walk with him to Filbert's, the house of Nell Gwynne.

QUITE A NEW ELECTION ADDRESS.

FROM A VOTER TO A MEMBER.

My Honourable Friend!

What is required of Members of Parliament is, that they should be faithful servants of the people and of the crown; failing which, not only the public will suffer, but the crown, in the absence, interception, or perversion of a truthful account of the real state of the country;—for, as in the case of the human body, it is necessary that the head comprehend the wants of it, in order to take measures to supply them, so it is with the body politic. And with the former, the agents best adapted to administer to its necessities are sought out. They do not stand on platforms, and overwhelm folks with long speeches, often "rivers of words, and drops of under-

standing," to convince people that they are excellent in their way, and to cajole them to employ them; on the contrary, people get up and run after *them;* they are solicited and sent for, and rewarded proportionately (it is to be hoped) to their deserts. So should it be, my honourable friend, in the case of membership of Parliament. The M.P. should be known for his qualities and fitness, and instead of interceding, he should be interceded with, to lend his assistance. He should be at no expense, for serving the people, and his reward should consist in the honour of adroitly managing the business entrusted to him. It should not be considered as a recommendation in an accomplished gentleman, or plain dealing individual, that he act honestly, and without immediate regard to bettering himself. Whereas, I notice that a member of Parliament, filling his post with the common honesty necessary in humbler life to ensure a livelihood, is sometimes considered as a wonder, a phenomenon, without opening his mouth or moving a finger in the work for which he is placed where he is. This would suggest that there is somewhat of laxity of principle acknowledged to exist in Parliament; that people regard it as a sort of necessary evil; and, on the principle that

Despair it was come, and he thought it content,

are content to put up with what they get. My honourable friend, how many among you are known familiarly for their good works? How many of you think it an honour to be the advocates of the people's happiness and improvement? How many of you go into Parliament, but to become other than you were? To be put into a position to do good, is not often the ambition of the would-be M.P. It is to be M.P. And instead of being by his own sheer force, a *made* man before entering Parliament, he does but consider the House the making of him, and that at the expense of passed over superiority immeasurable. It would seem, I think, my honourable friend, that the men for the duties required, are occasionally chosen at a chance.

In every small section of the community, two or three individuals are known for some peculiar qualities appertaining to usefulness; in every small collection of a dozen huts there is some person whose advice is sought on occasions of emergency; but really, my honourable friend, I never knew *you* to have been consulted in such wise before you added M.P. to your name. I even question whether many people knew of your existence until you tacked those two letters to your name, and thus made something out of a nonentity. "Who is Mr. So-and-so?" "Oh! he is M.P. for Such a place." "Oh!" That is enough, and Mr. So-and-so knows it; that is why he was so anxious to write M.P. after his name; he knows the meaning, if he do not know the translation, of the moral, "d'un magistrat ignorant, c'est la robe qu'on salue." But such people are to the body of the state as poisons to the system; they engender *bad blood*, by causing stagnation. How many members are there who give their votes in accordance with any inward conviction of their own, or the wishes of their constituents? How many who know what these wishes are, or knowing, care? How many are guided by them? How many a member votes in the House otherwise than as an adherent to a stronger member, or as an indirectly subsidised agent? Again; is it wholesome, my honourable friend, that at the present day it should be looked upon as a necessary, but vulgar and irksome ordeal withal, that a fit subject for a seat in Parliament should address a noisy mob, with the view of gammoning or flattering them into the notion that he is the very best person they could possibly select to act for them? That this hero, in order to propitiate himself into the good graces of those enlightened fellow countrymen, should pump up poor jests, and lend himself to buffoonery and littlenesses not so honest or harmless, and certainly not so amusing, as the clap-trap of the quack doctor and merry-andrew of the days gone by? That in order to give specimens of how he will act, he should vamp up his version of how he would deal with such and such a question, at such and such a moment—showing a brick as it were, as a sample of the house he would build? There is a strange carelessness as to who's the member, that is taken advantage of by the wary. Ask how it came that a vote was given for such and such a one, what Smith personally or historically knew of him, what he expected of him, what he hoped from him in regard to *anything*, and you will wait a long time for your answer. At the Presidential election in America, the other day, huge bells, it is said, were sent about, mounted on waggons, to wake up the voters. Some such stimulus is needed sadly in this country in these times, for, as a rule, unless something *out* of Parliament is to be got for a vote, or some spite paid off, people appear very calm, not to say indifferent, as to giving one at all. But not so apathetic are they where interests more near and plain to them are concerned. The densest will think twice before they entrust a piece of money to friend or foe, to lay out for them; they look out for a strict account of that; but a vote is frequently invested quite at random. What surprise there would be among some of the "lower orders," if they were told that, to all intents and purposes, the M.P. is in their service; that he goes to market for them; that it is his duty to make the best bargains he can for them; that he goes to Parliament not merely because he is the squire, or contractor, or what not of the neighbourhood, but because he is *sent* by *them*, as solemnly trusted to speak up for the general interest, and with no more reference to his money than because he has enough money to pay others to do his business whilst he is absent attending to theirs.

Be not puffed up, my honourable friend! It is only *some* of the speeches on the hustings that are delivered with the aim of enlightenment, and they are held as downright compliments to improved intellectual and educational standing, and are tributes to (as they are tributaries from) master minds, which the most obtuse and ignorant can hardly listen to, without, to some

extent, understanding and gaining by, be party feeling what it may. But these men are known to the world as men of generous and exalted natures. Guiding stars are these men, who, in arguing questions of interest to the commonwealth, have shown themselves the expounders and interpreters of what thousands of others have thought and would express. These men have *the voice of the people* with them; these men are not merely Members of Parliament, but Men of the People. When your M.P.-ship learns that meaning with it, my honourable friend, it will mean something and be something; so long as it does not, it will be Mere Pretence.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER VIII.

It is a busy time indeed. There is clatter, rattle, click-click, sudden pause, almost awful, a low proclamation, and then the setting in of chink and jingle; such crowds—half a dozen deep about the table; while outside promenade as thickly the well-dressed girls and ladies; the stupid men who are pouring into pretty ears their insipid jests, but which they are not to be blamed for thinking racy from the hearty reception they meet; the eager and amused first visitors, delighted and confounded with everything, and chuckling with a stupid complacency over the privilege of being allowed to enjoy those lights and gorgeous chambers, soft sofas, and amusement, all *for nothing!* There are mean minds to whom this element is a sort of whet. (I hear my dear pet at home say, as she reads, that I am getting a little bitter; but this place does help to give one a mean estimate of human nature.) But I look round and try to make out Grainger. I wander from one table to the other. Certainly on this night of excitement there can be no such study as these human faces and expressions, especially at the moment *the cards are being dealt.* Not at chapel or church, if the *Doctor Seraphicus* himself were preaching, could we find five seconds of such absorbed expectancy and attention. The heart, soul, all, are in the faces. Suddenly, as the verdict sounds—light, positive light, drifts over some, and a positive shadow over others; shocking, shocking, yet so interesting. Talk of a play! I could look on here from morning to night. It has endless variety, and I must be very straightlaced if I could not do so with that object, the study of human character, merely in view. By the way, the doctor said I was to relax, and amuse myself in every way. I suppose *he* meant to gamble, but that prescription, my good quack, won't do for me. I have certainly been moping a little. There I see a greater crowd—faces all looking at one face, gutteral whispers—"way"—so the Germans call "oui"—"zest luay!" I can understand—a hero of the night—a worn, lorn creature—a sad, high-browed, bald, gentlemanly man, fighting the desperate fight, standing up to the very teeth of the bank. He was playing what seems the forlorn hope—"*le maximoom,*" twelve thousand francs, every time; and a fat, clean, snowy cushion of notes was before him, delicately marked in faint blue, and as thick as the leaves of a book. On this night, Mephistopheles is playing one of his most cruel freaks, and one which he is very fond of. This votary has been winning during the previous few days, and, it is said, has carried off some six or eight thousand pounds. The pinch-faced ecclesiastical looking overseer walks about uneasily, and has regarded him with dislike all but openly expressed. But to-night I can see the bale of notes shifting across from one colour to the other, ruthlessly seized on, counted over with an ostentatious particularity, note after note laid out in splendid piles, and the trifling balance tossed back contemptuously. Then I see him gathering up his dwindling notes, turn them over with a pitiable irresolution, and then lay them down on another colour. Again is proclamation made; away they flutter, drawn in by the merciless far-stretching croupier's claw; and I see his yellow fingers working nervously at his forehead, which is as yellow. Then comes the sudden scrape as the chair is pushed back, and he is gone. No one cares for the unsuccessful, and no eye of sympathy, rather a look of impatient contempt, follows him.

But Grainger! Then it was my eye fell upon him, seated close by, a few gold pieces before him, his face distorted with impatience, fury, and hate. Indeed, it seemed another Grainger, or that a new soul had entered into him. It almost startled me; but still I recollected what I had laid out for myself. I went round softly and touched him: he looked back savagely.

"Well?" he said.

"Come away, do; I want to speak to you."

"Is that all? Then don't worry me now."

"Do listen to me, Grainger. Come, do."

"Confound it, leave me alone, will you. What the devil do you mean?" Such demoniac fury!

The clergyman was right after all. I had

been only deceiving myself, and with a bitter disappointment I turned away. In an instant I was attracted by a sudden confusion and din of voices, all speaking together. There was Grainger standing up, his arms swinging, and gesticulating; his mouth pouring out angry French. Three croupiers were as vehemently expostulating, and pointing, and emphasising with their rakes. They have not paid him, he says. They have cheated — swindled him! The "gallery," as they call the people standing round, take different sides; and now steals up, as if from behind a tree, that methodist-looking inspector, whose skin is drawn so tight, and whose clothes are so brushed, by machinery I think. He quietly whispers Grainger, no one can learn what he says; but I see his head nodding like the bill of a sparrow. That man's soul, I suspect, is as tight as his skin and clothes. I suppose he is worth his six or seven hundred a year to the administration. What he says seems to awe Grainger —already the gamblers are impatient at all this tapage about a few wretched louis, when there are little hillocks of gold, metallic ant-hills, rising all over the table.

The croupier seizes the moment. The cards are being dealt, and after *that* there can be no more row. Here again Mephistopheles and his crew have such an advantage. For in analogous relations, the crowd is sure to take part with one of themselves, but no one here knows what the next coup may bring; and in that expectancy, selfishness grows impatient and sides with the bank. I admire the dexterity with which the meaner human passions are thus turned to profit, and every little broil composed.

I turn away not a little disgusted. Certainly the strangest and most dramatic of scenes, and not unprofitable to study. See here, for instance, a little dingy shopwoman, with her two children over yonder on the sofa, perhaps selling candles and tobacco; in her brown thread gloves she has her "little florin." The dull anxiety in her German face is surprising. Down goes the piece on "manque," and I see her look away as the ball spins round. Her heart, I am sure, almost stops. She hears, but does not see, the result. The smile of delight is exquisite — she tries again — again succeeds — and again succeeds. Now she is over at the sofa showing her three prizes lying in the brown thread gloves. How she had clutched at them over the shoulder of the genteel player sitting, and who shakes her off impatiently, and half gives an execration. *He* has forty louis before him; but she was afraid that if she was not prompt, he or some other greedy player would seize on her little treasure. Then she returns full of triumph, flushed with victory. She watches and waits a favourable opportunity; but Mephistopheles has seen her with one of his grins—she loses her first piece, a palpable agony flits across her face. She tries again. Zero! Her little piece is in prison; something like agony is in that dull face. The next turn it is gone, she is trying again, but will lose. Oh, if she had been only *content to remain as she was!* The very air must be dense with ejaculations of this sort wrung from a thousand disappointed hearts.

Over yonder I see the young girl sitting disconsolate, and with such a wistful look towards the table. She is waiting for him. He is playing—Mephistopheles needn't trouble himself about that business. It is in fair train of itself, and will move on to his wishes, of its own motion.

As I go out on the cool terrace some one touches my arm.

"I owe you a hearty apology," he said, "for my roughness. Once we begin there, we lose all restraint."

I answered coldly, "that it was no matter."

"But it is matter," he said angrily; "I gave you a right to speak to me, and I met you most unworthily. I had some excuse, for the interruption brought about the row that you saw. I suppose your well-meant caution cost me only ten louis; but say you are not angry."

There was something very winning in his manner, and I could not resist him.

"But I thought you were going to give this up?" I said. "You led me to hope I had some influence."

During our absence a strange metamorphesis had taken place in the gardens. They had become crammed, and below us was a dense mass of merry figures, but now all lit up. In the daytime I had noted trees dotted about that seemed like palm-trees with drooping branches. It was a rare "administration" device to line these with gas-pipes, and hang white globes over them, up and down. When they treat our poor human nature as they do, it is only, all of course, that they should deal with the glorious fruits of the earth in the same fashion. Gas and paint, and gilding, and gewgaws, these make up *this* sunlight, and grass greens, and variegated colours of nature. To the fresh breath of Heaven, they prefer the miasma of their crowded

gaming-room. I daresay, M. D——, the superintendent, finds it suits his lungs better than the most bracing mountain atmosphere, and I suppose goes to Baden or Spa for his holiday. However, here I see the whole garden lit up with these trumpery illuminated gas arches and stars, and meagre hearts, and such things, and the crowd amused and delighted like children, as they are. Qu'il est beau! Vraiment c'est magnifique! and how generous and liberal this administration! All for nothing; says old paterfamilias—the same who sits on the Times, while he reads the Daily News, and little dreams that his eldest, Charles, has already paid this generous board some five-and-twenty napoleons "on the red," which alone would defray the cost of several of these festivities. But when the band begins the last galop with éclat and animation, and some half a dozen cheap Bengal lights are stuck in the trees, poor innocent trees! and made to fizz and blaze, then the enthusiasm bursts out; a perfect roar of childish delight rises, and we hear again how "beau," how "magnifique," this conduct is on the part of the administration. I am far from joining in these praises; I think them shabby and contemptible to a degree, with their few jets of gas, and their newspapers, and their chairs, for which nearly every one has to pay more or less handsomely. Nay, I have discovered that there is not a young girl, the most blushing, blooming, and innocent, who comes here, that does not coax papa for three florins or so, "just to try my luck, my dear," and which is swept into the hands of these monsters. Now, even Thomas, the valet, and poor Cox, the ladies' maid, they have stolen up and contributed their two hard earned gulden. Ah, M. D——, with the pinched nose and the drum-tight skin, decent and respectable as you are, gérant en chef of the company, or what you call yourself, do you think that if we had you in England, you would not be committed for trial summarily, and your correct demeanour would only go to influence the verdict of the jury. This fellow, I can see, observes the look of dislike with which I measure him—there is a rapport in these things as well as in likings—and I can see he is thinking, "You are coming into our net, my boy; we shall strip you, and that will teach you not to be offensive to the administration. You want a lesson."

Talking to Grainger last night, on the only subject on which he can talk fluently, a short stumpy man with a jet, glossy, hair-dresser beard and moustache, a little hat, and coat very short, also comes up and says languidly, "How do, Grainger?" He then sat down in front of us, leant back, drawing at his cigar with half-closed eyes, and moving his cane up and down between his knees in a sort of slow dance.

"Well, D'Eyncourt," said Grainger, "I went back to those infernal tables, in spite of the advice of my good friend, which I had determined to follow."

"Pretended to determine to follow," he answered, with a slow drawl. "Tell the truth always, and shame—our friends inside yonder."

I never saw a face I disliked more, it was so tallowy, and then the little eyes were quite flat and oval, and exactly of the pattern we see in a pig. I was going to say "cat;" but the head had not the character which a cat has. He had a sort of Turkish air, and I had often remarked him as he looked at ladies passing by, with an inert blinking, as though he were saying, "I bring *you* to me; if I chose to exert myself, you could not resist, but you are not worth it." He was a solitary man, though sometimes I saw him seated with a family of girls about him, his head back, his pig's eyes blinking at them, the words dropping languidly from his mouth, as who should say, "I just serve you out a few marbles, you are not worth more, and mind—I am doing this to amuse myself."

He had been a traveller, and the glossy locks were said to take a good deal of time to keep in that rich and glossy state.

"You say very queer things," said Grainger. "Only that we know you."

"No you don't; I want no excuse of that sort. I say what I like."

"Then some one will be punishing you one of these days."

The only answer was a sleepy look of contempt, which seemed to make Grainger uneasy.

"My friend here," he said, "believes in systems; my friend Austen, who has come here for his health."

The other never looked at me a second, or seemed to acknowledge this ambiguous introduction.

"*You* have always played on a system," he drawled out, "and with such success!"

"I never lost, but when I did. Curse them all! They are the devil's own mousetraps and spring-guns."

"You know best about him," said the other. "But you have stumbled on a truth for once—of course too late. You point a moral *here;* the good show you to their sons as a warning. If I was the adminis-

tration, I'd pay you to go away or to keep out of sight."

"You speak to me in a very strange way. If I didn't owe you money——"

"Say nothing then about it, as the situation must continue."

I felt, indeed, for Grainger; there was something so studied in this insolence; and I could not resist whispering a question: "Is it a large sum?"

A rueful nod was the reply, and a smile, a dull smile, melted over the tallow face.

"And so you have taken up a system—the last resource? Well, well."

"I did not say *I* had," replied Grainger. "My friend here, Mr. Austen, believes in it. Let me introduce him, Mr. D'Eyncourt."

Grainger seemed to find some revenge in this little stroke. I was provoked, and did not wish to know this man.

"Well, what is the system?" he said, without looking at me.

"I have nothing of the kind; only I noticed that everybody who lost to-night seemed to play very wildly, now on this, on that, without any guide."

"And pray what is the guide *you* have found out?"

"There can be nothing that you can call a *guide;* but it seems to me common sense that if one colour has been coming up a great many times, we may naturally begin to look out for the other."

"Oh, *that's* common sense is it?" he said, taking his cigar out of his mouth. "It may be so, I never pretend to say what is common sense or not. Still there are thousands who have thought of what you have said, thousands; in fact, every beginner *invariably* makes that discovery, after he has won three or four florins."

"You quite mistake. I am no beginner."

"Well, say a napoleon. It's the regular speech. The regulation discovery. Take my advice, keep your napoleon, and let your system go."

"I really don't understand," I said coldly. "I have never played, and with the grace of Heaven never *shall* indulge in what I think wrong and sinful."

He looked at me curiously. "I have nothing of course to do with that. In the church, I see."

"But for the mere theory," I went on, "I am right. I know something of mathematics, of the common chances of every day life, and every man of science will tell you that a rule is better than no rule."

"You are wrong, my dear friend," said Grainger; "utterly. Your man of science is a donkey in these matters. It is one of the invariable delusions of this place. You will find out in time."

"Look at this card," I said, warmly, "which I marked as the game went on, from curiosity, just to test the thing."

"From curiosity, just to test the thing," said D'Eyncourt. "Yes?"

"Well, see, it falls into the shape—exactly as I said. There is a proof."

"Oh! the card and pin," said he, with an air of superiority I could have struck him for. "Everybody appeals to *that.* Really this uniformity is delicious."

"Come away, Grainger," I said, feeling I could hardly control myself. "Let us have some supper."

As we walked away, Grainger said, "My dear friend, he's right. You can't understand these things so well. Your experience don't go beyond a sixpenny roulette table on a race-course. But here we do things en grand, you see."

"I am right," I said coldly.

"I *wish* you were. Well, when do you go on to Frankfort?"

When we got home I found a letter on the table from the German gentleman. He has at last returned, and will see me to-morrow morning. This looks like business. No letter for some days from my pet, which makes me a little uneasy. Not that I shall be uneasy—no matter what she may think, as she reads this. For I use these little "trials of the third class," as I call them, as so many opportunities for wholesome discipline, for keeping the mind straight and steady, hardening it to imaginary woes, strengthening and giving a tone to the judgment. I am right also, in my judgment, whatever that languid upstart may think.

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A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER VIII. FLITTING.

MARIAN ASHURST dearly loved her home. To her concentrative and self-contained nature, local associations were peculiarly precious; the place in which she had lived the life so essentially her own was very dear. The shabby old house, though she perfectly understood its shabbiness, and would have prized the power of renovating and adorning it as thoroughly as any petite maîtresse would have prized the power of adorning her bijou residence with all the prettiness of modern upholstery, was a shrine in her eyes. Base and unbeautiful, but sacred, the place in which her father had dutifully and patiently passed his laborious life—had it not been wasted? the proud discontented spirit asked itself many a time, but found no voice to answer "no." She had often pictured to her fancy what the house might have been made, if there had but been money to make it anything with, money to do anything with; if only they had not always been so helpless, so burthened with the especially painful load of genteel poverty. She had exercised her womanly ingenuity, put forth her womanly tastes, so far as she could, and the house was better than might have been expected under all the circumstances; but ingenuity and taste, which double the effect of money when united to that useful agency, are not of much avail without it, and will not supply curtains and carpet, paint, varnishing, and general upholstery. There was not a superfluous ornament, and there were many in the drawing-rooms at Woolgreaves, very offensive to her instinctively correct taste,—whose price would not have materially altered the aspect of Marian Ashurst's home, as she had recognised with much secret bitterness of spirit, on her first visit to the Creswells. She would have made the old house pretty and pleasant, if she could, especially while he lived, to whom its prettiness and pleasantness might have brought refreshment of spirit, and a little cheerfulness in the surroundings of his toilsome life; but she loved it, notwithstanding its dulness and its frigid shabbiness, and the prospect of being obliged to leave it gave her exquisite pain. Marian was surprised when she discovered that her feelings on this point were keener than those of her mother. She had anticipated, with shrinking and reluctance of whose intensity she felt ashamed, the difficulty she should experience when that last worst necessity must arise, when her mother must leave the home of so many years, and the scene of her tranquil happiness. Mrs. Ashurst had been a very happy woman, notwithstanding her delicate health, and the difficulties it had brought upon the little household. In the first place, she was naturally of a placid temperament. In the second, her husband told her as little as possible of the constantly pressing, hopelessly inextricable, trouble of his life. And lastly, Mrs. Ashurst's inexperience prevented her realising danger in the future, from any source except that one whence it had actually come, fallen in its fullest, most fatal might—the sickness and death of her husband. When that tremendous blow fell upon her, it stunned the widow. She could not grieve, she could not care about anything else. She was not a woman of an imaginative turn of mind; feeling had always been powerful and deep in her, but

fancy had never been active, so that when the one awful and overwhelming fact existed, it was quite enough for her, it swamped everything else, it needed not to bring up any reinforcements to her discomfiture. She was ready to go anywhere, with Marian, to do anything which Marian advised, or directed. The old house was to be left, a new home was to be sought for. A stranger was coming to be the master where her husband's firm but gentle rule had made itself loved, respected, and obeyed, for so long; a stranger was to sit in her husband's seat, and move about the house where his step and his voice were heard no more, listened for no longer, not even now, in the first confused moments of waking after the blessed oblivion of sleep. And in that awful fact all was included.

Poor Mrs. Ashurst cared little for the linen and the china now. Whether they should be packed up and removed to the humble lodgings which were to be the next home of herself and her daughter, or whether Mr. Ashurst's successor should be asked to take them at a valuation, were points which she left to Marian's decision. She had not any interest in anything of the kind now. It was time that Marian's mind should be made up on these and other matters; and the girl, notwithstanding her premature gravity and her habit of decision, found her task difficult, in fact and sentiment. Her mother was painfully quiescent, hopelessly resigned. In every word and look she expressed plainly that life had come to a standstill for her, that she could no longer feel any interest or take any active part in its conduct; and thus she depressed Marian very much, who had her own sense of impending disappointment and imperative effort, in addition to their common sorrow, to struggle against.

Mrs. Ashurst and her daughter had seen a good deal of the family at Woolgreaves, since the day on which Marian's cherished belief in the value and delight of wealth had been strengthened by that visit to the splendid dwelling of her father's old friend. The young ladies had quite "taken to" Mrs. Ashurst, and Mrs. Ashurst had almost "taken to" them. They came into Helmingham frequently, and never without bringing welcome contributions from the large and lavishly kept gardens at Woolgreaves. They tried, in many girlish and unskilful ways, to be intimate with Marian; but they felt they did not succeed, and only their perception of their uncle's wishes prevented their giving up the effort. Marian was very civil, very much obliged for their kindness and attention; but un-cordial, "un-get-at-able," Maud Creswell aptly described it.

The condition of Mr. Ashurst's affairs had not proved to be quite so deplorable as had been supposed. There was a small insurance of his life; there were a few trifling sums due to him, which the debtors made haste to pay, owing, indeed, to the immediate application made to them by Mr. Creswell, who interfered as actively as unostentatiously on behalf of the bereaved woman; altogether a little sum remained, which would keep them above want, or the almost equally painful effort of immediate exertion to earn their own living, *with management*. Yes, that was the qualification, which Marian understood thoroughly, understood to mean daily and hourly self-denial, watchfulness, and calculation, and more and worse than that—the termination on her part of the hope of preventing her mother's missing the material comforts, which had been procured and preserved for her, by a struggle whose weariness she had never been permitted to comprehend.

The old house had been shabby and poor, but it had been comfortable. It had given them space and cleanliness, and there was no vulgarity in its meagreness. But the only order of lodgings to which her mother and she could venture to aspire was that which invariably combines the absence of space and of cleanliness with the presence of tawdriness and discomfort. And this must last until Walter should be able to rescue them from it. She could not suffice to that rescue herself, but he would. He must succeed! Had he not every quality, every facility, and the strongest of motives? She felt this—that, in her case, the strongest motive would have been the desire for success, per se; but in his the strongest was his love of her. She recognised this, she knew this, she admired it in an abstract kind of way; when her heart was sufficiently disengaged from pressing care to find a moment for any kind of joy, she rejoiced in it; but she knew she could not imitate it—that was not in her. She had not much experience of herself yet, and the process of self-analysis was not habitual to her; but she felt instinctively that the feebler, more selfish instincts of love were hers, its noble influences, its profounder motives, her lover's.

It was, then, to him she had to look, in

him she had to trust, for the rescue that was to come in time. In how much time? In how little? Ah, there was the ever-present, ever-pressing question, and Marian brought to its perpetual repetition all the importance, all the unreasonable measurement of time, all the ignorance of its exceeding brevity and insignificance, inseparable from her youth.

She had nearly completed the preparations for departure from the old home; the few possessions left her and her mother were ready for removal; a lodging in the village had been engaged, and the last few days were dragging themselves heavily over the heads of Mrs. Ashurst and Marian, where Mr. Creswell, having returned to Woolgreaves after a short absence, came to see them.

Mrs. Ashurst was walking in the neglected garden, and had reached the far end of the little extent, when Mr. Creswell arrived at the open door of the house. A woman servant, stolid and sturdy, was passing through the red-tiled square hall.

"Is Miss Ashurst in?" asked the visitor. "Mrs. Ashurst is in the garden I see—don't disturb her."

Marian, who had heard the voice, answered Mr. Creswell's question by appearing on the threshold of the room which had been her father's study, and which since his death her mother and she had made their sitting-room. She looked weary; the too bright colour which fatigue brings to some faces was on hers, and her eyelids were red and heavy; her black dress, which had the limp ungraceful lustreless look of mourning attire too long unrenewed, hung on her fine upright figure, after a fashion which told how little the girl cared how she looked, and the hand she first held out to Mr. Creswell, and then drew back with a faint smile, was covered with dust.

"I can't shake hands," she said, "I have been tying up the last bundles of books and papers, and my hands are disgraceful. Come in here, Mr. Creswell; I believe there is *one* unoccupied chair."

He followed her into the study, and took the seat she pointed out, while she placed herself on a pile of folios which lay on the floor in front of the low wide window. Marian laid her arm upon the window sill, and leaned her head back against one of the scanty frayed curtains. Her eyes closed for a moment, and a slight shudder passed over her.

"You are very tired, Miss Ashurst, quite worn out," said Mr. Creswell; "you have been doing too much—packing all those books I suppose."

"Yes," said Marian, "I looked to that myself, and, indeed, there was nobody else to do it. But it is tiring work, and dirty," —she struck her hands together, and shook her dress, so that a shower of dust fell from it—"and sad work besides. You know, Mr. Creswell," here her face softened suddenly, and her voice fell—"how much my father loved his books. It is not easy to say good-bye to them; it is like a faint echo, strong enough to pain one though, of the good-bye to himself."

"But why are you obliged to say good-bye to them?" asked Mr. Creswell, with genuine anxiety and compassion.

"What could we do with them?" said Marian; "there's no place to keep them. We must have taken another room specially for them, if we took them to our lodgings, and there's no one to buy them here. So we are going to send them to London to be sold; I suppose they will bring a very small sum indeed—nothing, perhaps, when the expenses are paid. But it is our only means of disposing of them. So I have been dusting and sorting and arranging them all day, and I am tired and dusty and sick—sick at heart."

Marian leaned her head on the arm which lay on the window sill, and looked very forlorn. She also looked very pretty, and Mr. Creswell thought so. This softened mood, so unusual to her, became her, and the little touch of confidence in her manner, equally unusual, flattered him. He felt an odd sort of difficulty in speaking to her. To this young girl, his old friend's orphan child, one to whom he intended so kindly, towards whom his position was so entirely one of patronage; not in any offensive sense, of course, but still of patronage.

"I—I never thought of this," he said, hesitatingly; "I ought to have remembered it, of course; no doubt the books must be a difficulty to you, a difficulty to keep, and a harder one to part with. But, bless me, my dear Miss Ashurst, you say there is no one here to buy them. You did not remember me? Why did you not remember me? Of course I will buy them. I shall be only too delighted to buy them, to have the books my good friend loved so much—of course I shall."

"I had seen your library at Woolgreaves," said Marian, replying to Mr. Creswell's first impetuous question, "and I could not suppose you wanted more books, or such shabby ones as these."

"You judge of books like a lady, then, though you were your father's companion as well as his pet," said Mr. Creswell, smiling. "Those shabby books are, many of them, much more valuable than my well-dressed shelf-fillers. And even if they were not, I should prize them for the same reason that you do, and almost as much—yes, Miss Ashurst, almost as much. Men are awkward about saying such things, but I may tell his daughter that but for James Ashurst I never should have known the value of books—in other than a commercial sense, I mean."

"I don't know what they are worth," said Marian, "but if you will find out, and buy them, my mother and I will be very thankful. I know it will be a great relief to her to think of them at Woolgreaves, and all together. She has fretted more about my father's books being dispersed, and going into the hands of strangers, than about any other secondary cause of sorrow. The other things she takes quietly enough."

The widow could be seen from the window by them both, as she pursued her monotonous walk in the garden, with her head bowed down and her figure so expressive of feebleness.

"Does she?" said Mr. Creswell. "I am very glad to hear that. Then"—and here Mr. Creswell gave a little sigh of relief—"we will look upon the matter of the books as arranged, and to-morrow I will send for them. Give yourself no further trouble about them. Fletcher shall settle it all."

"You will have them valued?" Marian asked, with business-like seriousness.

"Certainly," returned Mr. Creswell; "and now tell me what your plans are, and where these lodgings are to which you alluded just now. Maud and Gertrude have not seen you, they tell me, since you took them?"

"No," said Marian, without the least tone of regret in her voice; "we have not met since your visit to Manchester. Miss Creswell's cold has kept her at home, and I have been much too busy to get so far as Woolgreaves."

"Your mother has seen my nieces?"

"Yes; Miss Gertrude Creswell called, and took her for a drive, and she remained to lunch at Woolgreaves. But that was one day when I was lodging-hunting—nothing had then been settled."

"The girls are very fond of Mrs. Ashurst."

"They are very kind," said Marian, absently. The Misses Creswell were absolutely uninteresting to her, and as yet Marian Ashurst had never pretended to entertain a feeling she did not experience. The threshold of that particular school of life in which the art of feigning is learned lay very near her feet now, but they had not yet crossed it.

Marian and Mr Creswell remained a long time together before Mrs. Ashurst came in. The girl spoke to the old gentleman with more freedom and with more feeling than on any previous occasion of their meeting; and Mr. Creswell began to think how interesting she was in comparison with Maud and Gertrude, for instance; how much sense she had, how little frivolity. How very good-looking she was, also; he had no idea she ever would have been so handsome—yes, positively handsome; he used the word in his thoughts, she certainly had not possessed anything like it when he had seen her formerly—a dark, prim, old-fashioned kind of girl, going about her father's study with an air of quiet appreciative sharpness and shrewdness, which he did not altogether like. But she really had become quite handsome, now, in her poor dress, with her grieved tired face, her hair carelessly pushed off it any way, and her hands rough and soiled; she had made him recognise and feel that she had the gift of beauty also.

Mr. Creswell thought about this when he had taken leave of Mrs. Ashurst and Marian, having secured their promise to come to Woolgreaves on the day but one after, when he hoped Marian would assist him in assigning places to the books, which she felt almost reconciled to part with under these new conditions. He thought about them a good deal, and tried to make out, among the dregs of his memory, who it was who had said, within his hearing, when Marian was a child, "Yes, she's a smart little girl, sure enough, and a dead hand at a bargain."

Marian Ashurst thought about Mr. Creswell after he left her and her mother. Mrs. Ashurst was very much relieved and gratified by his kindness about the books, as was Marian also. But the mother and daughter regarded the incident from different points of view. Mrs. Ashurst dwelt on the kindness of heart which dictated the purchase of the dead friend's books as at once a tribute to the old friendship and a true and delicate kindness to the survivors. Marian saw all that, but she dwelt rather

on the felicitous condition which rendered it easy to indulge such impulses. Here was another instance, and in her favour, of the value of money.

"It has made more than one difference to me," she thought that night, when she was alone, and looked round the dismantled study; "it has made me like old Mr. Creswell, and hitherto I have only envied him."

"Do be persuaded, dear Mrs. Ashurst," said Maud Creswell, in a tone of sincere and earnest entreaty. She had made her appearance at the widow's house early on the day which succeeded her uncle's visit, and had presented, in her own and in her sister's name, as well as in that of Mr. Creswell, a petition, which she was now backing up with much energy. "Do come and stay with us. We are not going to have any company; there shall be nothing that you can possibly dislike. And Gerty and I will not tease you or Miss Ashurst; and you shall not be worried by Tom or anything. *Do* come, dear, dear Mrs. Ashurst; never mind the nasty lodgings; they can go on getting properly aired, and cleaned, and so on, until you are tired of Woolgreaves, and then you can go to them at any time. But not from your own house, where you have been so long, into that little place, in a street, too. Say you will come, now do."

Mrs. Ashurst was surprised and pleased. She recognised the girl's frank affection for her; she knew the generous kindness of heart which made her so eager to do her uncle's bidding, and secure a long visit to the splendid home he had given his nieces, to those desolate women. Nothing but a base mean order of pride could have revolted against the offer so made, and so pressed. Mrs. Ashurst yielded, and Maud Creswell returned to her uncle in high delight to announce that she had been successful in the object of her embassy.

"How delightful it will be to have the dear old lady here, Gerty," said Maud to her sister. "The more I see of her the better I like her, and I mean to be so kind and attentive to her. I think Miss Ashurst is too grave, and she always seems so busy and preoccupied: I don't think she can rouse her mother's spirits much."

"No, I think not," said Gertrude. "I like the old lady very much too; but I don't quite know about Miss Ashurst; I think the more I see of her, the less I seem to know her. You must not leave her altogether to me, Maud. I wonder why one feels so strange with her? Heigh-ho!" said the girl with a comical look, and a shake of her pretty head, "I suppose it's because she's so superior."

On the following day, Mrs. Ashurst and Marian took leave of their old home, and were conveyed in one of Mr. Creswell's carriages to Woolgreaves.

SCOTCH PEARLS.

Scotch pearls have again come into fashion. The revival of the public taste in their favour may be attributed, partly to the recent failure of the Manaar fisheries in Ceylon, partly to the cheapness of the western gem, and in some measure, perhaps, to the fact that large quantities of Scottish pearls have been purchased by Queen Victoria and the Empress Eugenie. Some fifteen years ago, these pearls were scarce and lightly esteemed; but, owing to the exertions of a German merchant, and the care taken by him to select and exhibit the best specimens, the trade, which had languished for about a century, has very largely revived, and is now recognised as a legitimate branch of the business of the dealer in precious stones.

People are so much accustomed, when pearls are spoken of, to picture to themselves the Persian Gulf and its swart eastern divers, that they rarely think of the produce of their own shores, or imagine that the fine, delicate, pink-hued treasures which they admire in the windows of the jewellers, have been fished up out of their own native rivers. And yet this is not only so; but the practice of wading in the streams to fish for the mussels containing the pearl, dates back almost to antiquity. Long before the jeweller's art had become so common as to place ornaments for bodily decoration within reach of the multitude, pearls of great size and beauty were to be found in Scotland, in the possession of the humble, who, though they could not fail to admire them, were quite ignorant of their value. Rather more than a century ago, some artist, cunning in the detection of precious stones, proclaimed their worth, and a brisk trade in pearls sprang up between the bleak north of Scotland and the wealthy marts of the English metropolis. The fishing was confined to Perthshire and one or two counties beyond the Grampians; but the chief seat of the industry was at the head waters of the river Tay.

For a time the dwellers on the banks of the Tay were zealous, and pearls worth thousands of pounds were sent up to the London jewellers; but for a hundred years—between 1761 and 1861—either from lack of zeal on the part of the fishers, or from a falling off in the supply of the shell-fish, the fisheries were allowed to fall into disuse. During that long interval, Scotch pearls, which had before been plentiful, were only to be found in certain

shops and at wide intervals; or, if one of more than ordinary excellence turned up, it had been found by accident in the bed of one of the pearl rivers during a more than ordinarily dry season. So matters remained until about 1860. Then, a German gentleman travelling in Scotland, having his attention directed to some gems procured in the northern streams, was struck by their elegance and the peculiar tint which distinguished them notably from pearls of the East. Himself well acquainted with precious stones, he at once recognised the value of the Scotch pearl, and the important place it might be made to take in modern jewellery. Making inquiries on the subject, he discovered that there was at that time only one known pearl fisher in all Scotland, and that the produce of his exertions did not reach the jewellers, but was sold to a private customer. The German felt persuaded that pearls were to be found in considerable abundance in certain Scotch rivers, and that all that was requisite to ensure a large supply, was, to hold out some inducement to the poor people to search for the mussels. Full of his project, he travelled through the districts of Tay, Doon, and Don, and succeeded in purchasing from the poor cottagers a great many pearls, which they had fished for their own amusement, and which they merely kept as curiosities, not esteeming them of any particular value. The price given for the gems roused their cupidity, and a general desire for mussel fishing was created—a desire which rose into something like a mania when the merchant announced that he would purchase as many good pearls, at the same price, as could be forwarded to him through the post to Edinburgh.

Before he completed his circuit, the prospect of large and easily-earned gains had acted like a charm upon hundreds, and sent them to the rivers. Those who were otherwise employed during the day, devoted hours of the long summer nights to diligent search after the coveted shells; while boys and old persons, who had no regular avocations, waded day after day where there was promise of reward. In the course of a short time pearls of all kinds—good, bad, and indifferent—began to flow in upon the originator of the idea, from Ayrshire, from Perthshire, and from Highland regions far beyond the Grampians. He found himself the possessor of a collection which, for richness and variety, has seldom been surpassed. A trade in this class of gems was opened; the patronage of royalty was obtained; and once again Scotch pearls became known.

The principal rivers in which the pearl-mussel is found, are the Tay, the Don, the Teith, the Forth, the Ythan, the Doon, the Spey, the Ugie, and the Earn. The shell-fish in the smaller of these streams have been nearly exhausted by the severe spoliation to which they have been subjected; but in the classic Doon of Burns and the upper reaches of the Tay, the fishings still yield profitable results. When the yield of pearl-mussels was at its highest, and public attention was largely directed to the subject, a theory was advanced to the effect that the shell-fish in which the pearl grows, was only to be found in rivers whose sources were in lochs; but this was easily refuted by the fact that four of the pearl rivers are known not to issue from lakes. This point set at rest, it was next thought that the head-quarters, so to speak, of the much prized mussel, was in the lochs, and that the rivers contained only a comparatively small number that had been swept downward, and gradually accumulated at the elbows of the streams. The latter supposition was strengthened in consequence of a number of pearls having been accidentally discovered in Loch Venachar. Dredging experiments were conducted to test the truth of the new theory, but they ended in failure. Very few mussels were found, and those were so much scattered, and in some instances were so covered with mud, as to make the toil of search heavy, and the reward light. The hope of finding large beds of the valuable shell-fish in the lakes was abandoned, and operations were confined to the rivers.

The mode of fishing is primitive in its simplicity. No expense is incurred, no instruments are required. There is no mystery in the craft. Nothing is needed but patience. Men, women, and children, are rewarded indiscriminately; for skill does not avail. To search the bed of the stream until a collection of the mussels is discovered, is the first care; and this is often the most tedious part of the work. If these fresh-water shell-fish lay in such extensive clusters as their brethren of the salt water, a bank of them might be easily lighted upon, but they congregate in comparatively small numbers, and if the river have a muddy bottom the search is almost hopeless. Once discovered, however, the operation of fishing them out is easy. The fisher wades into the river, armed with a long stick, one end of which has a simple slit in it made by a knife. This stick he pokes down among the shells, and brings them up firmly wedged in the slit. He tosses the shells ashore, as he gets them, and usually does not leave off until he has amassed a goodly heap. Sometimes he has only to wade above the knees, and can pick up the mussels by stooping; but more frequently the water covers his hips, and at times he is immersed almost to the arm-pits: on which occasions he must dive with his head below the current. On some of the streams the people have hit on the expedient of raking the bed with a large iron rake and bringing the mussels ashore; but the cleft stick is the popular way.

When the fisher has collected shells enough to try his luck with, he proceeds to open them. Occasionally he carries the mussels home and proceeds leisurely; but more frequently, if the day be not too far upon the wane, he contents himself with searching for the spoil upon the river bank. Those who can afford a knife, make use of it to force open the shell; others, who have none, perform the operation deftly

with a shell sharpened for the purpose. This way has an advantage, inasmuch as there is less risk of scratching the pearl, should there be one inside. The fisher reckons himself unlucky, if he open a hundred shells without finding a pearl. Many a time, however, this happens, and he goes home deploring a lost day. The fates may be against him for a whole week. On the other hand, the first or second fish he opens may reward his labour. Frequently the toiler finds a dozen pearls, not one of which is of any value, by reason of bad colour, bad shape, or some other defect. Speaking roughly, it may be estimated that about one pearl in a dozen brings a profit to the finder; and that that one pearl is to be found in every fortieth shell. The chances of the pearl-searcher are about equal to those of the gold-digger, and many who start eagerly on the quest are soon disheartened. Perseverance and dogged determination seldom fail in the long run to realise modest expectations.

The mussels taken from a shingly or rocky bed are much more productive in pearls than those derived from the sand. Hence the experienced fisher does not usually waste his time in probing the latter, but if he "hit" sand, goes elsewhere in search of gravel. For a similar reason he shuns muddy bottoms, because, though he may get plenty of pearls there, they are too much discoloured. Naturalists are not quite agreed as to the age at which the mussels begin to grow the pearl, but it is always when they have attained to maturity and never during adolescence. The accustomed operator discards the young mollusc, and saves himself much unnecessary trouble.

Scotch pearls can never become a substitute for true pearls of the East; but their discovery in abundance has given a new ornament to the community, and has furnished a substitute for Eastern pearls far more beautiful and precious than the dingy imitations in paste.

MR. VOLT, THE ALCHEMIST.

I AM by profession a solicitor—I regret to say literally so; my practice being almost entirely confined to "soliciting" the settlement of long-standing debts, on behalf of clients whose less peremptory solicitations have proved ineffectual. Business of this nature took me to Stoppington, on the South North-Eastern Railway. I had a spare evening before me, and remembering that an old college chum of mine, Mark Stedburn, had married and settled down as a doctor somewhere in the neighbourhood, I resolved to look him up.

"You see that tall tower on the hill, right across the heath, three mile away? That's Mr. Volt's Tower at Firworth. Walk straight for the tower, and you can't mistake. You'll find Mr. Stedburn's a little further on."

It was a pleasant walk across the winter heath. The rain had fallen all day, but had ceased at sunset, and the stars sparkled as if the rain had washed them newly bright.

Not far from the tower, I met Mark Stedburn, bustling along on foot at a great pace. I might have passed him without knowing who it was; he had become so pale, and thin, and hollow-eyed; but he recognised me immediately.

"Look here, old boy," he said, "you will sup with me, and of course I will find you a bed; but I'm off to see a patient a couple of miles away, and I can't say to half an hour how long I may be detained. I tell you what you shall do till I return. Take my card, by way of introduction, and go in and see Mr. Volt at the tower there. He is always delighted to see visitors, and is a kind of man you won't meet every day."

"But what is Mr. Volt?"

"What is he? Everything, almost. A great chemist for one thing. He professes to believe in alchemy. But go in and see him for yourself. I will meet you there as soon as I can." And he shook hands, and went his way.

Firworth I found on a great heathy hill, with two clumps of firs—the greater and the lesser clump. About these, traffic has worn a bald patch in the heather on the hill-top, and thrown up a cottage or two, which is Firworth. In the midst of the lesser clump and in the centre of the rise, stands Mr. Volt's tall brick tower, tapering towards the parapet, and surmounted by a high wooden observatory, whose top is about ninety feet from the ground. Built into the walls of the edifice are mystical devices in dark bricks. A sun-dial, marked with strange characters, stood out in the light before the door, when I first saw it, with two enormous boles of gnarled dead trees on either side, taking grotesque shapes in the evening light. When I pulled the heavy iron ring at the end of a chain hanging before the large oaken door, it seemed as if the clangour of the deep-toned bell would never cease. It died away in queer echoes, that seemed to wake again in the topmost stories of the building above me. I could hear the sound wandering about the hollow tower until it reached the observatory, whence it floated out into the night.

The door was opened by a man, who might have been of any age between forty and seventy. He was either an old young man, or a young old man. He carried an oil-lamp which he shaded with his hand. I saw that he had a quantity of matted grey hair and beard; that his face was kindly and intellectual, though full and sleek; that his eyes, deep and brown and thoughtful, glowed with a strange dull lustre that made me suspect opium. His dress was disorderly, uncouth, and old fashioned.

Apologising for my intrusion, I introduced myself as a friend of Mr. Stedburn's, and presented Mark's card.

"I need no introduction," said Mr. Volt, quietly. "Living here alone, I am always glad to see a fellow-student. You are a fellow-student, or you would not be here. Enter."

We passed through some spacious bare rooms full of old sculpture, old pictures, old books, and philosophical instruments, heaped in piles

without care or order, and covered with dust and cobwebs. Then he led me into a large laboratory, of which every part was crammed with bottles of chemicals, retorts, crucibles, papers, more old books and pictures, more strange instruments, and all kinds of learned litter. A small furnace was at one end of the room, and beside it a still.

"You see the nature of my employment," Mr. Volt began, when he had begged me to be seated in a tall old-fashioned chair. "My time is occupied in chemical research. It is a wide field, sir, a wide field. It is true we seekers have found neither the philosopher's stone, nor the elixir vitæ, nor the alcahest; but in seeking them through speculative chemistry, we have found the secrets of steam, gas, electricity. It is good still to keep before us the three old aims of the alchemists; the more so, I think, if they never be attained, since they stimulate search. When we give up dreaming of wonders yet unrealised, we shall give up seeking."

"Am I to suppose," I said, "that you have yourself contributed an important discovery to science?"

"I don't know. I can scarcely tell," replied Mr. Volt, hesitating. "I fear it is in advance of the age." The eyes of the old man assumed a singular look of fulness, and the pupils became dilated. "You will probably be sceptical when I tell you that I have discovered a certain solvent by which to resolve the being we call man, at will, into his primitive elements of body and spirit: allowing the spirit by itself to travel over the universe, free from the gross trammels of the fleshly element."

"You do not mean to imply that you can go out of your body at pleasure?" I asked, doubtful of Mr. Volt's sanity.

"I do mean no less, and probably more," he replied, with composure.

"Surely it is more easy to go out of your mind," I observed.

"A jest is but a poor answer to a fact proved by experience. Still I will accept your very retort as an evidence how plausible my position really is. If it be so easy as you suppose for a man to go out of his mind (which, to me, involves a contradiction in terms, since I hold the mind to be the man himself), it surely must be less difficult to suppose he can go out of his body; which, I take it, is but the external idea of the man. For my own part I have been a great traveller, although my external idea has not left Firworth for many years. I explored Central Africa long before Livingstone. I am familiar with the whole tract of Abyssinia, and have investigated all the territory of Japan. Dreams, you say? The publishers say the same. Although I have written volumes on the subject of my travels, no one will print them, simply on the ground that I was not foolish enough to waste time and endanger my life on long sea voyages, when I could travel quicker without. I made the first step in my grand discovery," Mr. Volt went on, and I saw that argument was out of the question, "accidentally. Your friend, Mark Stedburn, who occasionally practises chemistry with me, was, at my suggestion, combining olefiant gas and iodine in a peculiar manner over the furnace, to produce a vapour of iodic ether at a high temperature with which to experiment. When heated to three hundred and eighty degrees, fumes of a pale violet colour and of a penetrating ethereal odour, rose from the crucible, dispersing themselves in wreathing clouds about the room. I remembered at this moment having made a very important omission in the directions I had given him, but feared to speak, as the operation on which he was engaged was of so delicate and absorbing a nature, that to disturb him even by a word would have involved his going through the whole process again. At the time I wished very strongly that he would take a certain book from a shelf beside him, and refer to section two hundred and seventeen, where he would find the omitted direction. His back was towards me at the moment, but I saw him reach down the book and refer to the place. When he had completed the experiment successfully, I inquired what had led him to take down that book? His reply was: 'I *felt* you had told me to do so.' Reflection convinced me that I had unknowingly projected my mind upon his; and I had reason to believe that the pale violet vapour had rendered this easier of accomplishment than under ordinary circumstances. I thereupon commenced a series of experiments with a view to ascertain how far it would be possible to carry out this principle of the projection of mind. I find it is first of all needful so to refine the body, by a course of low vegetable diet, succeeded by a day's fasting, that the spirit shall withdraw itself from its outposts and become gradually detached from the external idea, every part of which must be brought into abject subjugation to the will. Then, after inhaling the pale violet vapour for fifteen minutes, I take a small quantity of confection from this box, and, remaining in the heated fumes of the vapour, can distil the spirit from my body in a pure essence, as easily as we distil the spirit from any other earthly body. I thus obtain pure concentrated mind. In this state I can either travel—not involuntarily as in dreams, but consciously and under the direction of my own will—or I can project my mind on that of another person, and live in him and direct him for the time being, while my own body appears to sleep."

"May I ask of what this confection consists?" I said, very sceptically indeed. Mr. Volt placed in my hand a small tortoise-shell box, containing a dull greenish paste.

"That is the true 'hatchis,'" he explained; "it is made of many ingredients, but Indian hemp, and a peculiarly volatile preparation of opium, are two of its active principles."

"And the vapour?"

"No; that is my secret. But," he continued, dropping his voice almost to a whisper, "I meditate a still greater experiment in the projection of mind than any I have hitherto attempted. I propose for Mark Stedburn and

myself to perform the operation simultaneously: each to project his mind upon that of the other, and not to rest until we have literally exchanged ideas—I mean outward ideas—bodies.

"Has Mr. Stedburn consented to make the attempt?" I inquired.

"He has. And we intend to try it very soon. I do not, however, conceal from myself that the experiment is fraught with some risk, since we may have largely to increase the dose of hatchis. Now, having no near relations of any kind, I have resolved to execute a document, leaving my whole property to Mark Stedburn before we begin the experiment. And to prevent any difficulty, in the event of my decease, arising from ignorant persons who might stupidly attribute it to suicide (for it might look like it), I intend to execute an unconditional deed of gift, instead of a will. If you would act as trustee under this deed I should feel obliged."

Just then the great bell rang, and Mark came in: to my infinite relief.

"Well," he said, "has Mr. Volt told you of his grand discovery?"

"Oh, yes," I returned.

"What do you think of it?"

"I don't know what to think," I replied, raising my eyebrows to imply that I didn't know what to say about it in Mr. Volt's presence.

"You see," said Mark to Mr. Volt, "our friend's mind cannot quite grasp a new and powerful truth all at once. When he has tested it by experience, he will be wiser."

"No doubt," he assented.

Was Mark a believer, too? And were they both mad? As I looked at the two men together: Mr. Volt, plump and full-faced: Mark, thin and pale: it occurred to me that by deluding him into dreamy and speculative studies, Mr. Volt had sucked the life and health out of my friend as if he had been a vampire.

"This is the hatchis," said Mark, bringing me the box again. "Shall he try it, Mr. Volt?"

"Yes, if he will: though its effect, alone, without previous preparation of the body and without the violet vapour, can only be feeble."

I deprecated any trial of the sort.

"Try it," Mark insisted; "I give you my word as a medical man, and as your friend, that I have taken it myself, and that you shall feel no ill-effects from it. I promise that you shall not remain more than ten minutes under its influence. Take the dose Mr. Volt will give you. It is now ten minutes to nine. You shall leave the tower with me at nine punctually."

I consented. Mr. Volt brought a tiny thin spoon, and with it took out a portion of the hatchis, about as big as a hazel nut.

"Now," said he, "during the time you are under the influence of this paste, you will have certain experiences. Decide whether they shall be real or ideal. Real, in the sense of a succession of persistently coherent ideas independent of your own will (for I think I can so far project my mind upon yours as to insure that), or ideal, in the sense of a succession of ideas directed by your own will."

I replied that as I could at any time obtain a succession of ideas directed by my own will, I would elect a succession of ideas produced by his will.

Having seated me on the sofa, he gave me the spoonful of hatchis, looking steadily into my eyes as he did so.

I felt that his eyes hurt me somewhere in my head—I can't tell where—and looking at his legs I saw them grow large, and long, and zig-zaggy, till they flashed away up in the ceiling, and I felt a kind of veil-like misty rain let down before my eyes. I seemed to grow up out of this veil, or through it, and to gaze on the pure blue night sky and the sparkling stars, until quickly I was near them. They loomed, shining, on me, as huge full-orbed planets, and I could hear the whirr and rush they made, as they wheeled past me round their awful orbits until they grew distant and small, and faded into twinkling stars again. Then, looking down, I saw the earth spread out like a dark curtain beneath me, and I heard it yield two great notes like notes of a huge organ: one, harsh and discordant, from the cities that blazed up, a mass of flame and lurid smoke into the peaceful sky—the cry of trouble and unrest: the other, like the quiet murmur of the forest in the night winds. These two went up together to the stars and blended into music. Then I felt a cramping sensation and became oppressed, and, gradually recovering, found myself with Mr. Volt and Mark. I went home with Mark, and supped, and I went to bed and slept it off, and next morning returned to London, and fell into my humdrum life again.

I cannot tell how long afterwards it may have been, but as nearly as I can calculate it must have been at least two months, when I received a letter from Mark, announcing the death of Mr. Volt. The letter stated that, in attempting to carry out their intention of effecting an exchange of bodies, his eccentric friend had unfortunately made a mistake in his dose, which had proved fatal.

I went down to Firworth immediately. The first thing that struck me was the alteration in Mark's appearance. He had become unaccountably plump and sleek, and seemed wonderfully to have improved in health during the past few weeks. Another thing occurred to me as odd, and this gave me pain. Mark appeared strangely anxious to convince me that Mr. Volt was really dead, and not in a long trance produced by "hatchis." Notwithstanding my repugnance, he insisted on taking me to see his friend's body, that I might be assured of the fact. There could be no doubt whatever that Mr. Volt was dead, nor was there any doubt of the fact that he had not come to his death by an overdose of the "hatchis," for the body gave out a most powerful and unmistakable odour of opium. Now, it being the character of that drug to dissipate itself immediately in the system, even when taken to the extent of an ordinary poisoning dose, so thoroughly that it is next to im-

possible to determine its presence by the nicest tests, it was quite clear to me, from being able so readily to perceive the smell, that Mr. Volt had died of an enormous overdose of opium. As he had been a good chemist, it was hardly reasonable to suppose that he could have taken such a dose ignorantly, if in his senses. It remained, therefore, either that Mr. Volt must have committed suicide, sanely, or in a fit of insanity, or that the opium must have been intentionally administered to him by another person. When I reflected upon Mark's anxiety to prove that Mr. Volt was dead, and upon his interest in his death, and when I considered besides how singularly Mark was altered in his ways and modes of thought, as well as in his bodily appearance, for a moment I had suspicions of him. His account, however, was as follows: That, under the influence of the vapour, Mr. Volt had taken by mistake the same quantity of opium confection that he had meant to take of the green paste, while Mark, conscious of the mistake, yet being himself under the influence of "hatchis" at the time, was unable to recover himself soon enough to prevent the error, or to use remedial agents to save his friend's life. At the inquest Mark nevertheless suppressed all mention of the attempted experiment, and on his deposition that the deceased had been in the habit of consuming large quantities of narcotics, a verdict was returned to the effect that Mr. Volt came to his death through taking an overdose of opium in a fit of temporary insanity. The general opinion expressed by the rustic jury on dismissal, was this: "They always know'd old Volt were certain to pison hisself accidentally some day, and now he had been and gone and done it sure enough, and no mistake."

One afternoon, shortly after the funeral, to while away the time while Mark went to visit the same distant patient as before, I thought I would go over the tower and look into some of Mr. Volt's curious lumber. I obtained the key from Mrs. Stedburn, and letting myself in at the great heavy oak door, made my way to the laboratory. Nothing seemed to have been disturbed since Mr. Volt's decease. The place was in its wonted litter. Books, manuscripts, diagrams, instruments, bottles, retorts, crucibles, were lying about as of yore. Taking down a large manuscript tome from one of the shelves, and finding it to consist of some of Mr. Volt's dream-travels in Northern Asia, I blew off the dust, and having banged the covers together to beat out some of the pungent mildew from inside, began reading. I had finished the first chapter, when I heard my name called in a tone of entreaty.

"Tom!"

I looked round, but could see no one. Presently the call was repeated still more plaintively.

"Tom!"

There was no mistake about it, and it was Mark Stedburn's voice.

"Tom, I say!"

The voice seemed to come from the other side of the laboratory. I concluded that Mark was in the grounds calling from outside one of the windows.

"Where are you?" I halloed, going over to a window to look out.

"Here," said the voice, faintly, apparently from within the room. It seemed to come from one of the shelves close by me, but high up. I took the light ladder that belonged to the laboratory, and began to examine these shelves one after another: determined to see into this delusion, for I thought it nothing else. There were, on the shelves, books and bottles and papers—papers and bottles and books—in endless numbers, and all covered with dust. As I ran my eye along them, I observed one very small phial, less dusty than the rest, with a label on it in small characters, apparently written more recently than the labels on the other bottles, for the ink on this one was not discoloured by time as they were. I read thus:

MARK STEDBURN.
Bottled, Feb. 4, 1857.

The date was that of Mr. Volt's death. I was about to take the phial into my hands to examine it more closely, when a voice, that appeared to come from the inside of the bottle, said:

"Take me down very gently. Don't shake me, Tom, whatever you do. This is *I!*" It was Mark Stedburn's voice.

"*You?*"

"Yes, this is the *pure Essence of Mind*, which that rascal, old Volt, has distilled out of my body in a volatile spirit. Fool that I was to let him try, but I never believed he could do it. This is *I*, Tom—in a fluid state!"

I lifted him down carefully and placed him before me on the laboratory table. The bottle contained a thin colourless liquid, which I judged to be very subtle and highly rectified, because its surface was perfectly level, and not concave in the slightest degree—as would be the case with the strongest known spirit. In so confined an area, it would rise slightly at the sides of the glass, from attraction. This did not.

I took out the cork to try how he would smell.

"Don't, Tom, don't; it's *so* cold," he cried, piteously, "cork me, there's a dear friend, cork me quickly, or I shall evaporate, goodness knows where."

"Mark," I said severely, having complied with his request, "you are an impostor. You are a phantasm of the brain, or of the stomach. You either represent the ill effects of that bit of 'hatchis' I was foolish enough to take two months ago, or you are the ill-digested dinner I took to-day with you and your wife."

"I'm no impostor, Tom," he answered. "I'm an unfortunate reality. I'm persistent and coherent, and independent of your will. And I've been a most unfortunate reality without the ghost of an external idea ever since Volt served me this scurvy trick. You didn't dine with me to-day, Tom. I don't appreciate

dinners in my fluid state. You dined with Volt and with my wife."

"Nonsense, Mark. Volt is dead, and you and I buried him."

"Tom, you don't understand. Will you promise to listen, and not interrupt me any more? I want to lay my case before you for a legal opinion?"

Having rubbed my eyes, pinched myself, and trod on a most painful bunion which I keep for such emergencies, to prove I was not dreaming, I consented to listen to the bottle: which proceeded to deliver itself of this painful narrative.

"You are aware that Mr. Volt and I meditated making an exchange of external ideas — bodies — pro tem. Well; after nearly a month's dietary, to bring our susceptibilities to the requisite degree of fineness, we met in this laboratory for the purpose of carrying out the experiment. Before proceeding to business, Mr. Volt informed me that, in case of fatal results to himself, he had left me the tower and all its contents by deed of gift. This was very generous, as it appeared to me, but not very reassuring. We then got our still under way, and produced a great quantity of the violet vapour of iodic ether. When we had become thoroughly impregnated with its fumes, we each took a stiff dose of 'hatchis.' Now, whether Mr. Volt, through contriving to sit nearer than I did to the heating apparatus which gave out the vapour, inhaled more of it in the time than I, or how otherwise it took place, I do not know; but it is certain that he managed to distil the spirit out of his body some minutes before I was ready to leave mine. The consequence was, that while his body remained empty, waiting for its new tenant, his essence wandered about the room. 'Be quick, for it's awfully chilly,' his essence said to me. 'I am as quick as I can be,' I retorted. As soon as ever I felt myself loose, I disengaged myself from my external idea. And I had no sooner done this than Mr. Volt took possession of it; for I heard him say to me, in my old voice, 'All right, Mark; I'm *in;* how are you getting on?' You will scarcely credit the baseness of that man; but how do you think he had occupied the time till I was ready? If you will believe me, he had gone over to his empty body and poured a pint and a half of laudanum down its throat, and killed it, so as to leave me nowhere to go to! I could have cried with vexation; but being vapour already, I didn't like to, in case of injuring myself. I made several vigorous attempts to condense myself back into my own body; but my body was only made to accommodate one, and Mr. Volt more than filled it already. This accounts for its puffing out, and being so smooth and sleek, now he occupies it; it being a little tight for him. 'What is to become of me?' I cried. Mr. Volt, who was pretty comfortably settled in my body by this time, replied, 'We'll soon settle that,' and he went and fetched a great cold sheet of glass — ugh! — and condensed me into this liquid state, and poured me into this phial. You see why the rascal made his property over to me. It was only in order that, when he had stolen my body, he might enjoy it himself. Now, in all your professional experience, did you ever meet with a case like mine?"

"Never," I returned.

"Very well, then. What is my remedy in law against Mr. Volt?"

"Really," I said, "there is no precedent to go by. I don't see what you can charge Mr. Volt with."

"Charge him with!" he retorted, sharply. "Why, with every crime in the statute book. Begin with common assault. Isn't it a common assault to beat a man to a jelly?"

"Of course it is."

"Then how much more to reduce a man to a fluid state? What would he get for the common assault?"

"Say a fine of forty shillings and costs."

"And when he has paid that, can't you charge him with felony? Isn't it felony to steal wooden legs and arms?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Then how much the more to steal real legs and arms. He has got *all* mine. What would he get for that?"

"Not more than a twelvemonth (it being his first offence), *if* convicted," I said, with marked emphasis on the "if."

"You can charge him next with forgery, can't you? Presuming on stealing my body, he has forged my name to cheques on my banking account, besides embezzling the moneys in my cash-box."

"That is an unquestionable offence."

"How much for the forgery?" he asked.

"About seven years' transportation."

"Then, again, he is living with my wife; it's bigamy, and good for two years, at least."

"Scarcely bigamy on his part," I said, "since, if your story stood in evidence, your wife would be the bigamist, she having two husbands, whereas Mr. Volt is not a married man."

"That's unfortunate; but you can make him a co-respondent, can't you, and get damages out of him, and then prosecute him again for paying the damages out of my money? And then you can charge him with suicide, for killing his own body. What's the punishment for that?"

"Only to be buried, and he has been that; or, if he has not, then he is not dead, and cannot be charged with that offence."

"Make it murder, then. Indict him under the name of Stedburn, to save trouble, and charge him with the murder of Mr. Volt; when he has been sentenced, get him recommended to mercy, and transported for life, so that he may come back with a ticket-of-leave some day, and be sued in the civil courts under a writ of ejectment for wrongly holding possession of my body."

"All this is very well, my dear Mark," I said, "if you could only prove your case, but I am very much afraid you have no locus standi. The question is, could you, as a bottle, give such evidence on these indictments as would satisfy a jury?"

I heard the bottle murmur some reply,

and then I became conscious of nothing but the strange veil-like misty rain, and, looking through this veil where it drew away thin and transparent, I saw my *own* body asleep on a couch in Mr. Volt's laboratory, with Mark Stedburn beside it, loosening my necktie and shirt collar and sprinkling water on my face. Then the veil shrivelled up and was gone, and I was sitting on the sofa with Mark's hand on my pulse.

"You're all right now, old fellow, eh?" he said, kindly.

"Let me go back to London, Mark. I have had such queer ideas since Mr. Volt's funeral, that I don't feel myself."

"Funeral! Why, here *is* Mr. Volt. Do you know how long you slept under the 'hatchis'?"

"I woke once, I know, two months ago, and went to London. You haven't given me that stuff again since I came back, have you?" I stammered in doubt.

"You had one dose precisely ten minutes ago, and it is now nine o'clock to the minute," said Mark, holding up his watch in confirmation. "—Singular preparation, is it not?"

"I hope," said Mr. Volt, "you are now thoroughly convinced of the reality of the impressions produced by 'hatchis.' They were sequent and recurrent, I believe, as those to which you restrict the term reality; were they not? And they took place independently of your will, I think?"

"Quite so," I rejoined, "but still they differed from reality in this important particular, that whereas phantasy told me you had committed suicide, I wake up to find you resolutely and persistently alive."

Mr. Volt much wished to argue this point, but Mark insisted that our time was out, and dragged me away from the tower to his house to supper.

"He is one of the cleverest chemists we have in the country," Mark explained, as we walked home.

"But he surely is not sane?"

"He is only mad on one point," returned Mark, "and I humour him in that for the sake of his intelligence in other respects; but rest assured that, although we frequently exchange ideas, in the common acceptation of the phrase, I have no earthly intention of exchanging outward ideas with Mr. Volt, in his sense of the term."

THE WITCH.

I THINK I'd like to be a witch,
To sail upon the sea,
In a tub or sieve, in storm or shine,
Mid wild waves flashing free.

I'd catch the billows by the mane,
The bounding billows and strong,
Goad them, and curb them, or trample them down,
Or lull them with a song.

I'd churn the sea, I'd tether the winds,
As suited my fancy best,
Or call the thunder out of the sky,
When the clouds were all at rest.

I'd wreck great ships if they crossed my path,
With all the souls on board,
Wretched, but not so wretched as I,
In the judgments of the Lord.

And then, may be, I'd choose out one
With his floating yellow hair,
And save him, for being like my love,
In the days when I was fair.

In the days when I was fair and young,
And innocent and true;
And then, perhaps, I'd give him a kiss,
And drown him in the blue.

In the blue, blue sea, too good to live
In a world so rotten and bad,
I think I'd like to be a witch,
To save me from going mad!

AN ENGLISH PEASANT.

IF there be any class of the English people that is pre-eminently unknown to itself and to all other classes, it is that of the farm labourer. The squire or other great landed proprietor of the neighbourhood knows them after a certain fashion, as he knows his cattle; but of the labourer's mind he has as little idea as he has of that of the animal which he bestrides in the hunting-field. He knows the peasant to be a useful drudge, like the horse that draws the plough, but unlike the horse, to be a burden upon the poor-rates, either present or prospective. Furthermore, he suspects him to be a poacher; and in his capacity of magistrate deals out the harshest justice (or injustice) towards him, if the suspicion ever comes to be verified. The squire's lady, and the clergyman's lady, and the fair matrons and spinsters of the Dorcas Society, or managers of the Penny Clothes Club, know the labourer's wife as the grateful and very humble recipient of eleemosynary soup, coals, flannels, medicines, and other small mercies that are great in their season. The parson knows the labourer and his family better perhaps than anybody, if he be a true parson, and does his duty by his flock; but it is doubtful whether even he, however zealous and truly christian-like he may be, penetrates into the arcana of the labourer's mind, or understands what the poor man really thinks of his condition in this world, or his prospects in the next. The farmer who employs him ought to know him better, but he does not. The farmer's only concern with him is on a par with the concern he has for his inanimate tools—for his plough, his spade, or his harrow, which he buys as cheaply as he can, uses as long as possible, and throws away when they are worn out. He employs the labourer when he is young and strong, and gets as much work out of him as he can, for

the smallest price allowed by the custom of the neighbourhood, and quietly consigns him to the tender mercies of the workhouse, when old age or decrepitude overtake him. To the dwellers in great cities the peasant is scarcely known, always excepting the stage peasant, the favourite dolt and clodhopper of the dramatists, the incarnation of all that is stupid, if he is well disposed towards society, and the incarnation of all that is vicious and dangerous, if he has sense enough to forsake the paths of village virtue.

And the peasantry know as little of themselves as others know of them. They do not comprehend, like other labouring men, the value of union and brotherhood in preventing wages from being screwed down to the starvation point. They do not see the necessity—if labour fails them in their own district—of trying their fortunes elsewhere. The law does not make them serfs, but they make serfs of themselves by their ignorance and limpet-like tenacity in sticking to the parish in which they were born. Oliver Goldsmith may or may not have been right when he spoke of this class of a former day; but extinct in our own as "a *bold* peasantry, their country's pride;" but it is only too certain in our time, that if we are to look for a "bold" peasantry anywhere within the circuit of the British Isles, we must look to the border counties, to Scotland, and to Ireland, rather than to Saxon England. In the southern shires, more especially, the condition of the peasant is virtually that of the slave. He is tied to his parish by circumstances too formidable to be overcome by any such small and weak agencies as he can employ; and he can only escape from it, to run a worse risk of pauperism in the great cities, that do not need him, and that have no work to offer that he is capable of performing. By the hardest labour he cannot earn a decent subsistence, even in his youngest and strongest days. He is submissive to authority, because he is so snubbed, and buffeted, and preached at, and lectured at, as to have become hopeless of bettering himself morally or physically. He is what in the south of England is called a "droil," and what in the north of England and the southern shires of Scotland is called a "snool," i.e., one whose spirit is broken by oppression and continuous ill-treatment. He does sometimes, it is true, enter a protest against his life and its circumstances; and kindly fate sometimes takes pity on his misery and lifts him out of the ill-paid drudgery which is his normal state. In his wild young days, when his passions are strong, and he happens to entangle himself in a love affair, from which he has no other means of escape, he desperately enlists for a soldier, and if he be strong, well-behaved, fortunate, and has received as much education as enables him to read, write, and work up in arithmetic as far as the rule of three, he may rise in middle age to the dignity of a sergeant. A French peasant under similar circumstances may console himself with the idea of a marshal's baton, or a colonel's sash in his knapsack, but no such prospect exists for the British recruit. A broken constitution, and a pension of ninepence a day, are his prospects after forty, and if he return to his native village after this time, and is able to hedge or ditch or follow the plough, he is better off than his fellows by the ninepence aforesaid. If he be reckless in another direction, and takes the notion into his head, which he sometimes does, that the wild fowl and game generally belong of right as much to him as they do to the squire or other great landed proprietor of the neighbourhood, he gets into difficulties far more serious than love, however illicit and unfortunate, could bring upon him, and is lucky indeed if he do not find himself in jail, and still luckier if, when he is released from it, he is not possessed by seven times as many devils of desperation as possessed him when he and the law first came into conflict. Young peasants are to be considered particularly fortunate if they attract the attention of the squire or the squire's lady by their handiness or good looks, for they may in consequence be promoted from the paternal cottage to the stables or to the servants' hall of the great mansion. This is almost the only road of fortune that is really open to the agricultural masses. Once in this position the way is clear before them, if they are prudent, provident, ambitious, and not too honest, to amass from their savings, their "vails," their perquisites, and their "priggings," as much as will elevate them into that upper stratum of society which is occupied by greengrocers, beershop-keepers, and other small tradesmen who have capital enough to invest in business. But these are the exceptions, just as the manumitted slaves in the days of negro slavery in America were the exception to the otherwise universal bondage of the race. "Once a peasant always a peasant" seems to be the fate of the large majority of this useful and laborious class, leaving, perhaps, a margin of

five or six per cent who drift off into the army, the stable, or the kitchen. Why the English peasantry, the border men excepted, should be inferior in energy, or in the art of bettering themselves, to their compeers in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, has never yet been satisfactorily explained; unless—and I do not mean to say that this particular explanation is wholly satisfactory—it be from the innate sluggishness of blood. Whatever may be the cause, there is a lack of imagination among them that leads to a lack of enterprise, and that seems somehow or other to run in the blood of those portions of the British people that are not of Celtic origin or intermixture. The peasantry of Saxon England have produced among them but two poets, Robert Bloomfield, the author of the Farmer's Boy, and John Clare, author of the Village Minstrel; neither of them a poet with any claims to the first or even to the second rank, while Scotland's poets, sprung from the agricultural and labouring classes, are to be numbered by scores, including Robert Burns, a greater than fifty Bloomfields and Clares rolled into one, and a long bead roll of genuine bards and minstrels, of whom it is sufficient to name Allan Ramsay, the barber, William Ferguson, the sailor, James Hogg, the shepherd, Robert Tannahill, the weaver, Hugh Miller, the stonemason, and Jean Glover, the strolling tinker.

I once endeavoured to make a more intimate acquaintance with one English peasant, than squires and parsons and charitable ladies ever think it worth while to cultivate with persons of a caste, from which their own caste is as much removed as that of the brahmin from the pariah. The old man was a fair specimen of his class, neither much better nor much worse, neither much more intelligent nor much more apathetic than his fellows. He was seventy years of age when I knew him first, and he lived for three years afterwards in the workhouse, the sole resource for such as he, when old age comes upon them. His name was Plant, and the parson of the rural parish in which he was born and bred, and in the neighbourhood of which he had laboured until his limbs grew stiff and his right hand lost its cunning, informed me that there had been people of that name in the parish for five hundred years; perhaps, he said, offshoots of the royal house of the Plantagenets, but, at all events, a very ancient family: as if all families were not equally ancient, if we could but trace them! William Plant married when he was nineteen years of age, and in the receipt of the not very magnificent wages of ten shillings a week. His wife, who was a year older than himself, was a domestic servant in the family of the village doctor, and had saved from her wages at the time when Plant became enamoured of her no less a sum than seven pounds, a fortune in the eyes of one who, as he said, had never before held two sovereigns in his hand. The seven pounds went a good way towards furnishing their little cottage of two rooms; and for two or three years, as the wife was a handy woman, and could do plain needlework, wash, iron, and get up fine linen, their humble household was happy enough, and Plant thought he had done a good thing to marry. "It kept me out of the public-house," he said, "and out of bad company. It had been 'my delight of a shiny night in the season of the year' just to go out for a lark, but I never did that after I was married. By-and-by the children came, and twice the wife had twins. It seemed to me that the twins brought us good luck, for the squire's lady was very kind when they came, and sent clothes, and baby linen, and a little port wine for the missus. The vicar's wife was good too, and made as much fuss over the babies, for a month or two, as if they were real live angels. And it so happened that before twelve years passed over, the missus and I were in possession of eleven children, and very hard put to it to find them bread, let alone clothes. The missus, after her fifth child, was no longer able to work, and had more than enough to do to keep the house in order and mend the rags. My wages were by this time two shillings a day. But, Lord love ye! that was nothing, not enough for two of us, let alone thirteen. How we managed I don't know. They say God Almighty always sends bread when he sends mouths and stomachs. I did not find it so always, and when one little child —a poor sickly ailing thing it was—died of fever, I was, I am afraid, almost wicked enough not to feel very sorry. It was buried by the parish, and the missus wept over it, just as if it had been the dearest treasure in the world, as no doubt it was to her. It is very hard to keep the little things. But very hard to lose them all the same, especially for the womenkind. We got helped on a bit by the parish every winter; and the two elder children—a boy and a girl — when they were eight years old, earned a shilling now and then by weeding

and scaring the crows and sparrows. The missus, too, earned a little in harvest time, and betwixt us all we managed, though God knows how, just to live, and to keep ourselves warm, though not too warm, I can assure you. Didn't the children go to school? Well, to the Sunday school, and in winter now and then to the day school: but you see we could not spare them for the better part of the year; for as soon as they growed up to be eight or nine they could earn summat, however small, if it were only picking up sticks in the woods and road side to help to light the fire. It wasn't much as they learned at the Sunday school, only reading; no writing or ciphering—just about as much as I learned when I was a boy. I can read a little. I read the Bible and the newspaper sometimes, but I can't write, and I don't understand newspapers much, except the murders, the robberies, the fires, and such like. The missus can write a bit, and tried to teach me; but I was too old to larn, and never could make nothing on it. She taught Tom, our oldest boy, to write, and Jane, our oldest girl; but the children came on so fast after a time, and she had so much to do with managing them and mending their clothes and screwing and scraping to feed them that she had to give up teaching. I kept my health and strength wonderfully well—the Lord be praised. I think that if I could have earned twenty-four shillings a week instead of twelve I should have been happy enough in good seasons. Did I never think of going to America? Well, I dare say I may have done. They say there's plenty of land there, and few men—just the revarse of what there is here; but how was I to get to America, I should like to know? I could not save a penny in a year, and it would have cost a matter of forty pounds, I have heerd, to pay our passage out. Forty pounds! You might as well come upon me for forty millions, or ask me to pay the national debt! No; it was of no use for me to think of America, and besides, even if I had the money, I was too old to go to America when I first heerd on it. It's too late in the day at fifty-six years of age to go to a new country, and to a new people. I think my eldest boy, Tom, would have gone with his wife and children if he had had money enough; but it was the same with him as with me. He got married like a fool, as his father was before him, when he was barely twenty; but not being of such a good constitution as me, he couldn't stand the work and the trouble as I did; and though he's only fifty now, he's an older man nor I am at seventy. He's got eight children, and one of them's a born idiot and another a cripple. It's hard times for him, I think; and if anything should happen to him the whole family would have to go to the workhouse. Any more of my children married? Yes. My oldest daughter. She was a tidy girl, and a pretty girl too, and got into service at the vicar's. She had good wages, and a good place—plenty to eat and drink, and all her money her own to buy clothes and ribbons with, and sometimes at Christmas a pound to spare to help her poor old father and mother through the winter. But she did not know when she was well off. She would go and get married, after she had been only three years in service, to a fellow as I never could bear—a jobbing gardener, who is a good deal too fond of his beer and bad company to make a good husband. She's never known what it was to be comfortable since her marriage, and wishes she was back again in service, with a shilling to spare for a ribbon now and then. But she has no shilling and no ribbon, nor is likely to have. How many grandchildren have I? Well, I think there have been more than forty of them, but a good many of 'em are dead—died young, and I *do* sometimes think that if all the children that are born into the world lived and growed up to be men and women that there wouldn't be half room enough in the world for 'em, leastways not in England and in our parish. You say it's wrong for the poor to marry in this thoughtless manner. Well, perhaps it is. I don't say it isn't; but it's about the only comfort the poor have got, though the comfort always brings sorrow along with it, and most things do in this world as far as I know on. It would be rather hard lines if the birds and the butterflies might mate, and men and women might not unless they were rich and had a hundred and fifty pounds a year, and were squires, and dukes, and such like. The missus? Aye, she's been dead more 'an ten years now—rest her soul; an' if she had been alive I should not a gone into the workhouse to be separated from her, but have got an out-door allowance, and managed somehow to toddle down to the grave alongside of her. She was a good woman she was, and sorely tried, and wears I hope a crown of glory on her head in heaven at this moment. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' says our

Lord and Saviour, 'for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven,' and she is in the Kingdom of Heaven, where I hope to be."

The old man was going to be pathetic, so I suppose I must have put a sudden question to him, for he said, rather sharply for so very mild and meek, and utterly down-trodden and worn-out a person, "Have I no dislike in eating the bread of the parish? Well, I can't say I have. I would rather eat it at our cottage, and have an allowance to live with one of my sons. And the 'skilligalee' is wretched poor stuff, and I don't like the house rules, and would like to get out oftener than I do; but still right is right, and the parish owes me my bread. I've toiled in it all my life: and after all, though I'm a pauper, I'm a man, and not a dog to be turned out to die in a ditch. And then you see, God is just. I've had a bad time of it in this world, and I'll have my good time of it in the next."

The reader will see that there was a good deal of stolid endurance in Mr. Plant, but very little pluck, energy, or spirit. There was good material in him that had never been worked up to any good end; material that, under more favourable circumstances, say in the prairies of America, where labour is scarce, the soil fruitful, and farms to be easily obtained by the poorest of squatters, might have been so manipulated as to have converted this patient and hopeless serf into a lively, active, and prosperous citizen. Though England may be over-peopled by thoughtless and improvident labourers of the lowest class, like poor Plant, the world is not overpeopled by any means; and how to bring the Plants to the soil that cannot come to the Plants is the problem. Before any satisfactory solution is likely to be obtained, the Plants are likely to go on breeding, toiling, and suffering for centuries to come, as they have done for centuries past. The more's the pity!

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. ETON TO NEWBURY.

High up in the thin blue air, on black floating wings, the crow skims over the grey stone cottages of Berkshire, dropped down, as Tom Brown truly says, in odd nooks and out-of-the-way corners, by the sides of shadowy lanes, and primeval footpaths. The bird skims over snug thatched roofs and little gardens, ill-made roads, and great pasture-lands dotted here and there with clumps of thorns. Passing over the broad green playing-fields of Eton, where the noble elm-trees sentinel the river, the crow, regarding the Eton boys below with benign approval as the future hope of England, takes the playing-fields as the text for a pleasant school-boy anecdote of 1809 still extant. One morning Shelley, the poet, then an Eton boy, roused to indignation by an enemy's taunts, tossed his long angelic locks, and accepted wager of battle from his foe of the playground: Sir Thomas Styles, a plucky little urchin, far younger and shorter than himself. They were to meet at twelve the same day. The coming battle was the whispered talk of every one, and as soon as the rush out of school took place the ring was formed, the seconds and bottleholders were chosen. The tall lean poet towered high above the little thickset baronet. In the first round, Sir Thomas felt his way by speculative sparring, while Shelley tossed his long arms in an incoherent manner. When they rested, the baronet sat quietly on the knee of his second; but Shelley, disdainful of such succour, and confident of victory, stalked round the ring and scowled at his adversary. Time was called, and the battle began in earnest. The baronet planted a cautious blow on Shelley's chest. The poet was shaken, but went in and knocked his little adversary down. While he lay there half stunned, Shelley spouted Homeric defiances, to the delight of his audience. In the second and last round Styles, however, began to wake up, and eventually delivered a settling "slogger" on Shelley's "bread-basket." It fell on the poet like a thunderbolt; his nervous sensibilities were roused; he broke through the ring and flew, pursued by his seconds and backers, but distanced them all, and got to earth safely at the house of his tutor, Mr. Bethell, whom he soon afterwards nearly blew up with a miniature steam-engine which a travelling tinker had manufactured for him.

It was just beyond Datchet Mead, where Falstaff was quoited into the Thames, "like a horse-shoe hissing hot," that old tradition says Izaak Walton used to come from his Fleet-street shop to meet Sir Henry Wotton, the Provost of Eton, looking for little trout; worthy old men, full of years, and wise yet kindly knowledge of the world, they used to sit here, watching their bobbing floats, baiting hooks, and capping verses, believing that "angling, after serious study, was a rest to the mind, a cheerer of the spirit, a diverter of sadness, a calmer of unquiet thoughts, a moderator of passions, a procurer of contentedness, and begetting habits of patience and peace." Well might Wotton repeat his own verses here by the river side:

> Welcome pure thoughts, welcome ye silent groves,
> These guests, these courts my soul most dearly loves.
> Now the wing'd people of the sky shall sing
> My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring.

Years afterwards, swarthy Charles the Second and his laughing ladies used to fish here. Pope describes the king,

> Methinks I see our mighty monarch stand,
> The pliant rod now trembling in his hand;

and

> And see, he now doth up from Datchet come
> Laden with spoils of slaughtered gudgeons home.

A flight further to Bray, home of the immortal vicar, Simon Alleyn, who, most dexterous of helmsmen, steered his bark safely through the conflicting troubles of Henry the Eighth, when the axe was always ready for malcontents—of Edward the Sixth, when the Tower's dangerous doors so often opened and shut—of Queen Mary, when the fires were always ready for heretics—and of Queen Elizabeth, when the rack was always on the strain for conspirators. He was first a Papist, then a Protestant, then a Papist, and then a Protestant again. Bland soul, so ready to explain away past sermons and write new ones, what a calm face he must have turned on all violent controversialists! How difficult he must have found it to preach his first sermon after an accession. How he must have exhausted himself in prudent efforts to buy up his last violent invective against Protestantism—now newly re-established. What confusion he must have got into, between gowns and robes. Fuller says the vicar had once seen some martyrs burnt at Windsor, and found the fire too hot for his tender temper. When some ribalds accused him of being a shameless turncoat without a conscience, a mere shifty trickster, and a poor frightened changeling, who went which way the wind blew him—

"Nay, nay," said he, smiling, "I have always kept one principle, which is this: whoever rules, to live and die the Vicar of Bray."

Glancing on to Maidenhead the crow alights on the chapel roof to pick up a tradition of another and less lucky Vicar of Bray.

James the First, one day, when hunting, rode on before his dogs and huntsmen to seek for luncheon. He rode up to the inn at Maidenhead, quite ravenous. He tumbled himself off his horse and shouted for the landlord. Beef and ale—a pasty—anything. The landlord, careless of stray guests, shrugged his shoulders. There was nothing ready but one roast, and the Worshipful Vicar of Bray and his curate were already busy at that; perhaps they might (as a favour) allow him to join them. King James caught at the offer, strode up stairs, knocked at the door, and asked permission. The vicar churlishly scowled up from his full and smoking platter. The curate, jovial and hearty, begged James to be seated. The king sat down and plied a good knife and fork. He tossed off his ale; he told racy stories; he made both his reluctant and his willing host roar with laughter. At last there came the mauvais quart d'heure of Rabelais; the bill arrived. The curate put down his money with careless frankness; the vicar paid his bill gloomily; but the luckless guest could not pay at all. "Eh, mon! he'd left his purse behind him in his other breeks." The vicar saw no joke in this matter, and flatly refused to pay for the suspicious stranger. The happy and guileless curate expressed his pleasure in being able to make some return for the amusement he had received, and paid the stranger's share. Then the three men went out on the balcony. A huntsman then came riding up, and, seeing the king, leaped off his horse and went down on one knee in the street. The sullen vicar threw himself at the feet of James, and implored forgiveness: to which King Jamie replied: "I shall not turn you out of your living, and you shall always remain vicar of Bray; but I shall make my good friend the curate a canon of Windsor, whence he will be able to look down both upon you and your vicarage."

The crow also takes record of Maidenhead (so called, either from the head of one of the eleven thousand virgins once preserved there, or from the timber-wharves that existed there in the Saxon times) that it has a tradition which forms a touching episode in English history. Charles the First, after several years' separation from his children — swarthy little Charles, grave James, and poor little Elizabeth —was allowed to meet them at the Greyhound Inn, at Maidenhead, thanks to the amiability of Lord Fairfax and the kindliness of the army. "The greatest satisfaction the king could have," says Clarendon. Poor king! Poor children!

Towards the Thames, the crow glides off for a moment, to rest on the ivy-covered gable of Medmenham Abbey. In a lovely spot, close by the ferry house, the building stands: the tower and cloister being modern, and little remaining of the old Cistercian monastery which at the Reformation contained only two inmates. It was here that Francis Dashwood, afterwards Lord le-Despencer, founded the infamous club of the Franciscans, of which Wilkes and Lord Sandwich were members. "The twelve monks of Medmenham" celebrated orgies, which shocked even that coarse age. Sterne's friend, John Hall Stevenson, of Crazy Castle, was said to be one of them. Over a door in the ivied gable still exists the Franciscan motto. "Fay ce que voudras." A mystery hung over all the feasts of the Franciscan Club. The workmen who furnished and adorned the abbey were kept locked up in the house, and were hurried back to London when their work was done. The dinner was always passed in at the half-opened door, and no servants were allowed to wait. Devil worship, said some; Bacchic festivals, said others. Country people trembled to see the abbey windows gleam till daybreak, and to hear the mad laughter of the revellers. The story went that the consciences of the monks were so tormented that they could only sleep at night in cradles, and part of Wilkes's cradle is still shown. A curious set of pictures at the Thatched House Tavern in London, belonging to the Dilettanti Society, has preserved reminiscences of some of the brothers, who, dressed like monks, are represented as ridiculing sacred rites. How these portraits have got mixed up with the Dilettanti Society the crow knoweth not. Wilkes is said to have broken up the Franciscan Club by a mischievous trick. One night when the wine was circulating fast, and the orgies were at their highest, a huge ape, hideously dressed, with horns and other satanic additions, was lowered down the chimney. The candles were at the same time extinguished by a pre-arranged plan,

the ape sprang upon the back of one of the sceptics, who, believing it to be the prince of evil himself, fell on his knees and began to shout and pray. The club never rallied afterwards.

Swift away, after this short resting, to where the blue smoke rises over Reading, like the smoke from a witch's caldron. Let the crow alight first on the abbey gateway. This abbey, founded by Henry the First, and endowed with the privilege of coining, attained a great name among the English abbeys by the "incorrupt hand" of St. James the apostle, presented to it by Henry the First. After working thousands of miracles, raising cripples, curing blindness—after millions of pilgrimages had been made to it, and it had been for centuries incensed and glorified, this wonderful hand was lost at the Dissolution. Some worshipper, who still venerated it, hid it under ground, where it was found years afterwards, and is now preserved at Danesfield by a Roman Catholic family. It will for ever remain a moot point, however, whether the hand at Danesfield is the original hand of St. James, or a mere mummy hand, such as mediæval thieves used as candlesticks and talismans. "Hands of glory" the rascals called them.

This hand of St. James made the fortune of the abbey at Reading, and was an open hand, no doubt, to receive all current coin from the groat to the broad piece. Bells rung, incense fumed, priests bore the cross, and acolytes the thurible in the abbey at Reading, encouraged by the éclat of the incorruptible hand. Henry the First always delighted in the abbey. He held a parliament here; and here he received Heraclius, the patriarch of Jerusalem, who, safe out of reach of Saracen's arrow and sabre, presented the king with the somewhat nominal gifts of the keys of the Holy Sepulchre and the royal banners of the sacred city, and urged Henry to a foray on the Infidel. The king was true to Reading till his death; for when the stewed lampreys of Rouen hurried him from the world, his heart, tongue, brains, and bowels were buried in France, and the rest of his royal remains forwarded to Reading, where his first queen, "the good Queen Molde," lay already, and his second wife Adeliza afterwards joined him. The abbey became quite a royal cemetery after the eldest son of Henry the Second was buried here. At the Dissolution, when royal tombs were destroyed and the bones "thrown out," the relics were beaten about by the sextons' spades and tossed anywhere. The poorest rubbish heap of Reading had some of them to feed its nettles. At the same period Hugh Farringdon, the abbot, was so contumacious and stubborn, and so put out the royal tyrant by his prate about popes, councils, and decretals, that the king, flying out at last, had him hanged, drawn, and quartered, and then turned the abbey into a palace, which was destroyed at the great rebellion: the ruins remaining as a stone quarry for ages. On the last abbot but one, King Henry the Seventh played a trick. One day the king, hunting near Windsor, lost his way, and, riding on to Reading, passed himself off to the unsuspicious abbot as one of the yeomen of the guard. A noble sirloin of beef was placed before him; on this he plied so well his knife and fork that the abbot was delighted, and watched him with placid admiration. "Well fare thy heart," he said; "for here, in a cup of sack, I do remember the health of his grace your master; I would give a hundred pounds on condition that I could feed so lustily on beef as you do. Alas! my weak and squeezie stomach could hardly digest the wing of a small rabbit or chicken." The king was silent, pledged him, and left him undiscovered. Soon after, armed men beat at the abbey gate, and the squeezie abbot was hurried to the Tower. The abbot was there kept some weeks a close prisoner, and nurtured on bread and water; his body was empty of food, Fuller says, and his mind full of fears. He could not, resolve it how he may, imagine how he had incurred the king's displeasure. At last, the abbot's fast having been long enough, a sirloin of beef was set before the delighted man, and he soon verified the proverb that two hungry meals make a glutton. Suddenly in sprang the king out of a lobby where he had been in ambuscade. "My lord," quoth his majesty, "deposit presently your hundred pounds in gold, or else no going hence all the days of your life. I have been your physician to cure you of your squeezie stomach, and now I want the fee which I have deserved." The abbot put down the money at once, and returned to Reading, lighter in purse, but also lighter in heart.

The town, long celebrated for its cloth trade, was besieged by Essex and the Parliamentarians in 1643. The Puritan entrenchments are still visible in the valley. Ten days the townspeople, encouraged by Sir A. Ashton, bore the cannonade and then surrendered; but the greatest alarm in the town was in 1688, when the Reading men got into their heads a notion that the rough-handed Irish soldiers of King James were coming to massacre the inhabitants during divine service. The panic received the name of "The Irish Cry."

Archbishop Laud was the son of a Reading clothier, and the charities he founded still exist. John Bunyan used, in the days of his persecutions, after his twelve years and a half in dismal Bedford jail, sometimes to pass through Reading, where he was known, on his way to visit secret Baptist congregations, disguised as a carter, and carrying a whip. He is said here to have caught the fever of which he died.

Perched on the tall flint tower of St. Lawrence (a church once memorable for a silver gridiron, and a portion of St. Lawrence), the crow remembers that at this church Queen Elizabeth would attend service, looking sharply after the preacher's doctrine. A portentous object to a nervous clergyman, that stiff old lady in the ruff and jewelled stomacher must have been, glowering at him from under the

bushy pyramid of her auburn hair. John Blagrove, the mathematician, whose cloaked and ruffed effigy in this church still grasps the typical globe and quadrant, left a strange legacy for the encouragement of Reading maidservants. The churchwardens of the three parishes were every year to choose so many maidservants of five years' standing, who were to meet and throw dice for a purse of ten pounds on Good Friday. "Lucky money," says Ashmole, "for I never yet heard of a maid who got the ten pounds but soon after found a good husband."

Quick-beating wings bear the crow to Newbury, where the fame of Jack of Newbury invites him to a moment's rest on some house-roof of the quiet solid-looking town by the swift Kennet. Immortal Jack was a poor clothier, who, by prudence and industry, contrived at last to set a hundred looms at work. When the Scotch invaded England, in Henry the Eighth's reign, Jack's quota of defence was four pikemen and two horsemen; but his generous heart disdained so poor a levy, and he marched northward, followed by fifty tall horsemen and fifty footmen, well armed and better clothed than any. If he ever reached Flodden, Jack no doubt did good service there against the Scottish spears. When the king returned to England, he went to see the brave clothier, and was splendidly feasted by Jack, who sensibly refused the invidious honour of knighthood. This worthy man's best work was carrying to a conclusion a commercial treaty with France and the low countries, which Wolsey for a long time thwarted, suspecting Jack of Lutheran principles. But Jack was bold, and said: "If my Lord Chancellor's father had been no faster in killing calves than my Lord Chancellor is in despatching of poor men's suits, I think he would never have worn a mitre." Jack is the hero of Newbury: an incitement to poor men's sons for century after century: a ceaseless source of good and blessing to the Berkshire town.

The reformers were much persecuted at Newbury. Three martyrs were burnt at the sand pits, a quarter of a mile from the town. When they came to the stake they fell to the ground. Palmer, one of them, a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, repeated the thirty-first Psalm, and then all rose and kissed the stake. When Palmer warned the Newbury people of Popish practices, a brutal bailiff's servant flung a fagot, and struck him in the face. The sheriff broke the rascal's head for it, calling him a cruel tormentor. When the quick flames began to dart upward, the three martyrs held up their hands to Heaven, and crying, "Lord Jesus strengthen us!" died peaceably.

In the civil war, Newbury was the scene of two hot battles. In the first, the cavalier officers fought in their shirts, not waiting to put on their doublets before they took horse. Essex's men wore branches of fern and thorn in their hats. The London train-bands held very firm at Newbury Marsh, though Prince Rupert charged them with the war cry of "Queen Mary in the field!" Six thousand men were left upon the ground. Eventually, after six hours' fighting, Essex retired to Reading, Prince Rupert cutting his rear guard to pieces as it got entangled in Dead Man's-lane, near Theale. That same night sixty cartloads of slain were brought into Newbury, including the blameless Falkland, the cavalier "sans peur et sans reproche," who had predicted his own death. A poplar still marks the spot where he fell. The young Earl of Carnarvon, who led the cavalry, was brought back to Newbury thrown across a horse "like a dead calf." The second battle was in 1644. Charles was on his way to relieve Donnington Castle. Manchester's army first attacked Shaw House, while Waller, crossing the Lambourn, seized Speen—a suburban village—and attacked the king's horse. The Puritans advanced on Shaw House, singing psalms. Colonel Lisle, unarmed and in his Holland shirt, chased them bravely, shouting, "For the Crown!" "For Prince Charles!" "For the Duke of York!" while the bullets stormed on them from the windows and parapets of the manor house. Cloud after cloud of pikemen gave way before the cavalier charges. From that stately old red brick Elizabethan house, which the crow still sees surrounded by old-fashioned gardens, the cavaliers shouted approval of brave Colonel Lisle and his deeds. At last the king's men drew off to Donnington, and thence to Oxford on a fine moonlight night: sullenly leaving the church where Jack of Newbury lies buried and the market house which contains his son's portrait.

One waft of the wing brings the crow to Donnington, to that fine old ruin falsely supposed to be the castle given to Chaucer by John of Gaunt. It did, however, really belong to the poet's grand-daughter, Alice, and the great oaks in the park were probably planted by Thomas Chaucer, the poet's son. This castle is the spot held so bravely for the king by Colonel Boys, who being told of three of the towers being down, and that the Puritans would give no quarter, and would not leave one stone upon another, exclaimed, like a brave cavalier as he was: "That he was not bound to repair the castle, but, by God's help, he would keep the ground for the king."

Now, fast towards Wiltshire and the broad downs, where the wind blows free as over the ocean, the crow speeds its flight.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER IX.

FRIDAY.—Just returned from Frankfort. Such a charming old town, refreshing to see in its reverend innocence and hoariness, after the flaunting garishness of that new and wicked spot. I saw the merchant, who received me very graciously, and had lunch ready. After it was over we talked of business, and he began by saying that he

had determined to give the sum he had offered before, and no more. Something prompted me at that moment to try and do something for my friend, and act a little, though I doubt if it was strictly conscientious. Still, making a bargain is making a bargain, and I boldly said that it was too little, out of the question, &c. He was a Jew, and I think not disappointed that there was to be some "haggling." On that we set to work; my pet should have seen the latent diplomatic powers I called into play. Will you believe me—if I *did* not triumph over the Jew in the end, and obtain a hundred pounds more for my friend! A memorandum was signed, and a day named for me to go before the consul, and finally conclude the matter. I am greatly elated at this little victory. On coming home, I found Grainger waiting at the train. My first impulse was to tell him of what I had done; but a wiser discretion checked me. Here again is a little discipline; and it seems to me, on analysis, that this wish of communicating news, &c., is a mere shape of vanity, and arises from no desire to gratify or amuse any one else. He told me he had not played the whole day, but that he had amused himself *watching* the game, and trying whether there was anything in what I had said.

"Well, I spent two hours in that way," he said, "and, my dear friend, I must give it against you. Our friend the Pasha, as you called him, is right. You don't know what that man knows."

"He is a shallow creature, I know," I said; "I wonder how he is even tolerated here."

"That fellow has a history, I can tell you. Harems and seraglios, and sacks, and all that. Romantic to a degree."

"Romantic," I said, angrily; "that is the genteel name for vice and villany and rascaldom."

"Hush! here he is. I mustn't abuse him, as he has me bound—I mean I mustn't let him *hear* me abuse him."

D'Eyncourt came up, his head back, his round hat back also, and with a little pink on the centre of his "mutton-fat" cheeks.

"Well?" he said, "going in to play—to step into the bird-lime, and try a system?"

"I can't play," said Grainger. "I am going to give up. It's a struggle, and it's for the best."

"What! going to reform? How many tricks have you tried in your life, my friend? Is this the last?"

"Tricks, Mr. D'Eyncourt?" said Grainger, colouring. "Tricks?"

The other put his head further back, as if to get a good look, and said, coldly, "I repeat, *tricks*, Mr. Grainger."

The other, muttering something to himself, looked down.

"Yes, I always speak plain. Well, come in, and let us look at the game. D'ye hear?"

"No use asking you, Austen," said Grainger, as it were obeying an order; "and I won't press you to come. Only one moment."

He looked very helpless and appealingly at me.

"Oh, I forgot," said D'Eyncourt; "you mentioned something about scruples. Stay with your friend. There's Colonel Manby, yonder."

I had already, my pet will remember, rather qualified the resolution I had taken about going into the rooms. In *that* way, I believe, we are not responsible, in any sort, for the doings of the wicked—at least as regards men—in different actions. As well might we look into the lives of all friends' jealously, and "cut" every one of them—fathers, brothers—who had done anything that was not quite correct. I said:

"I have no scruples of the kind. Merely walking through, or looking on, does not affect the question."

High play was going on; the count with the worn face was in his place, his little bale of clean notes before him.

"Ah, there he is!" said D'Eyncourt. "They have got their pigeon. Let me see. How many feathers has he left? Just a few, but enough to play with. Yes, they are giving him two or three back, to stick into his wing, if he can."

There was a crowd opposite, uttering the usual ejaculations—much as what the lower Irish do when a strange story is told to them: "Il a gagné," "C'est le maxi-moom"—so they pronounce it. "Fooh!" the breath being drawn in between the teeth.

"The old story," said D'Eyncourt, contemptuously.

> "Only begin,
> And then win;
> That's their ruse,
> To make you lose;—

a little gambling proverb of my own. He should be told of the new system."

I had been watching the player, and an idea occurred to me. I snatched a card

and a pin. It is a duty, surely, to give a lesson now and again to the foolish. It is serving the world and society.

"Now," I said, coolly, "what if I tell you how he ought to play to win? What will you say to my common sense then?"

"What will I say? *Your* common sense! I am sure I can't tell."

"You shall be told, then; and you be witness, Grainger."

Red had come up three times. "Now," I said, "let him put on black."

"No," said Grainger. "Don't you see—he is going for the run."

"Well, what do you say?" I said to D'Eyncourt.

"Nothing," he answered; "why should I?"

The player did "go for the run," with his "maximum," and away it fluttered to the green leather tomb of the capulets, the slab of which shut down on it with a fatal click. I said nothing. The player then waited until two deals had intervened.

"Now," I said, "let him put on red, and he will win."

He almost seemed to have heard me. Down went his maximum, pushed across with trembling fingers; and in a few seconds was heard the chant, "Rouge gagne, et couleur."

I will not dwell on this, for fear of tiring my pet; but I will tell the whole scene to her later. But "suffice it to say," as the novelists are fond of repeating, I *really foretold* nearly every successful colour, and, by some mysterious rapport, the count seemed to follow or anticipate every prophecy of mine.

"By G—," said Grainger, in a strange excitement, "it's devilry or magic! For Heaven's sake lend me, do, some one, three naps—only three—one, then—one! Well, then a double florin; you won't refuse that?"

"Recollect your promise," I whispered to him—"your resolution, your solemn resolution."

"Folly!" he said; "you are robbing me at this moment; it is cruel of you."

I was watching D'Eyncourt. He was biting his lips with vexation. I could not resist.

"You won't admit my common sense," I said; "it is not to be expected."

"It is easy to play a game with a pin and a card; back your opinion with money, and I'll do the same."

"I never play," I said, coldly, "and never shall. There are some whom it is hopeless to convince of the difference of a mere mathematical study and a pursuit so dangerous and deadly to both soul and body."

"Caution, religion, and the theological virtues. Good. Now, there go my five louis on red."

"If you wait, about twice more," I said, calmly, "you would have a better chance. I hardly think red could come up now."

"Rouge *perd*, et couleur" came before he could actually answer me. I went on.

"I dare say there might be a chance for you now, if you would risk it."

"I shall go on black," he said, putting down ten louis.

Again, "Rouge gagne, et couleur!"

So it went on, I, with a most extraordinary success in my guess, being astray not more than three or four times; and when I showed the card, the pin-holes all certainly fell into the shape I had predicted. Mr. D'Eyncourt, however, had lost over fifty louis.

"This comes," he said, "of playing with people talking about you, pestering you with systems and cards and pins. There, Manby—there's a gentleman here turned prophet. He'll tell you something about the Derby."

Before I could reply he was gone, and I turned to Grainger.

"He is inclined to be insolent," I said, "and I am not inclined to put up with it. Like any one who cannot bear to be told they are in the wrong, he wishes to give vent to his own spleen and malice."

Grainger was hardly attending.

"Why didn't you let me? I might have been rich this moment; I'd have made three hundred louis in the wake of that fellow. I might have been free from *him*, and, but for my slavery, I might have paid my bill at the lodgings."

"Is it so much?" I asked.

"Two hundred florins—a wretched sum. But he is insolent enough for its being *ten thousand*."

"Is that all?" I said. "We are very poor, as you know, Grainger; but if a hundred florins will help, I can let you have that much, but you must solemnly swear; not a florin goes down on that green cloth. An oath on your Bible, mind."

"I'll swear anything," he said. "You are noble, and have always treated me nobly, whatever I may have said. Still," he added, suddenly, "you know it is not so heavy an obligation. You admit that? Only a few pounds, you know."

There was something in his tone that rather jarred on me, but I recollected that he was always subject to these alternations, passing from a most cordial, genial, and even softened tone, into a cold, bitter, and hostile manner. It was his way. He was a disappointed man, so we must have allowance. So that day terminated. Somehow the calm country town monotony of mind which I had brought with me seems to have given way a little before the whirl, as it were, of this place—the strange figures, the dramatic incidents, the curious motives of this place. But I am learning precious lessons. It is like tonics and cold baths for the mind. After all, how many of us go through life without having even the *faintest* conception of what is going on, no conception of what attitudes, and motions, and wonderful freaks the human mind is capable of. Novels and plays tell us a good deal, but we do not believe in them. One day lets in a light worth a thousand of Mudie's "sets." Shall I own that I dwell with complacency on the fact that I, a mere rustic, ungraduated in the world's devices, should have held "my own" in that little scene to-day, by the sheer force of good plain sense and reason? Thank Heaven, I am growing better every hour! Heaven is very good to us, certainly.

CHAPTER X.

TUESDAY.—An interval of some days has passed without my writing a line. The fact is, the hours are running by so fast, and so many little events crowd into the day, that I have hardly time to do anything. I have even got a little backward in my letters to my pet. I have been making a sort of study of this mysterious and dangerous science of chances, which is luring all these poor souls to destruction. It is one of the most curious subjects of inquiry, and there can be no doubt that there is more in it than the common vulgar affectation of superior knowledge will admit. If I could but freshen up my old mathematics, I could work the thing out regularly. The doctor tells me that having something of interest thus to amuse and occupy the mind is the real secret of my improvement. I could have told *him* that. Shall I own to another discovery I have made, viz., that when Mephistopheles is playing for souls, he does it with tolerable fairness. I constantly hear men, Englishmen too, going out with flushed faces, and muttering, "Pack of d—d swindlers — set of cheats!" Now, a very narrow scrutiny compels me to own that their dealings are fair, or seem fair. Shall I go further, and say that they really *seem* to put themselves at a disadvantage with those they encounter. That, of course, is their business, not mine. I spent *four* hours the other morning watching the game, and I suppose riddled some half a dozen cards with pin-holes. The result was the same in *the main*. I see the system like a revelation, adding to it, from experience, this rider: the splendid gift of *self-restraint*. There they all break down; they cannot halt in time, even for five minutes. One would be tempted to go and whisper this simple recipe to each one of the poor dupes who are rushing down this fatal hill; but it is not *my* business. Quem Deus vult perdere. *I* could not save them, though he could. I see at these little seats of extortion—the stalls where they sell photographs and ornaments at literally double the price they can be had anywhere else—I see absolute treatises on the game. One a serious volume at twenty francs; the others little handbooks at a franc, giving "a sure and infallible method for winning." These little impostures were diverting from the solemn tables set out and the grand terms. "The intermittance," "series," and the oracular advice. The qualities requisite for the gambler are to be "courage, vigour, élan, coolness, and insensibility." "System," above all, must be pursued (and so far I go with him); "otherwise," he adds, gravely, "you will indeed remain a simple *player* (joueur), but you will never become *speculateur*." He fills pages with his various recipes, but at the end announces that without a capital of some *four thousand florins* you will not have "a secure base of operation to work from." And yet I see this rubbish in the hands of many a poor fool; and, what is more, I see many a greater fool sitting industriously with his book and two pencils, one red and one black, marking the colours. One dreadful old fellow, who is nearly blind, has a complete apparatus—a little dial, mounted on a pincushion, and bristling all over with red and black-headed pins, which he shifts about, and not for half an hour, perhaps, will the safe combination he so desires, arise, and then he plays his miserable florin. Of course he loses, as indeed I could have told him. I was almost tempted to lay my hand upon his arm and check him; but, as I have said so often, that is not my business.

Sometimes I see a comic incident—the table laden with gold and covered with billets, and the croupier touching each with the magic rake, repeating aloud the sums staked. "L'or va au rouleau!" (This always in a growl, as who should say, "We have you.") "Vin-sang louis au bilyet!" (This in a mournful manner of expostulation, as who should say, "Why not *all* the bilyet?") And "Mœtyez à la masse!" (This very sharp and short, like the click of a trigger before firing.) An humble fellow has laid down his double Frederick, a good stake, but modest, seeming more than it is among the surrounding magnificence. The dealer is about to begin, when, in a fit of compunction, the man calls out, "Moitié à la masse!" and causes a perfect roar in the gallery. Yet these men had their hundred and two hundred louis, their "maximoom" even, depending on the deal. So they laughed and went to play, when the guillotine was at its hardest work.

The gardens are getting dull enough; I grow tired of the regularity of the music, coming at that one hour. Yet there are people who stay here the whole winter.

A letter from my pet, lying on the table, waiting for me. Very long and full of news. I shall paste it in this place.

"My own dearest Alfred,—God in his infinite mercy be thanked and praised, for the delightful news each one of your dear letters brings us. Such unhoped-for blessings from Homburg, and, indeed, shall I confess it, when I parted from you, I had a horrid, miserable, presentiment, that it was to be the last time I was ever to see that dear face again. I did not let you know the agonies I was suffering. For it was for your own dear health, though I had not the least hope that it would be benefited. But thank God that it is so. Now I shall say no more on that.

"How charming, how amusing, how interesting is your diary, dearest Alfred! I have read no novel that comes near to it for interest. So acute, so full of observation, such a knowledge of human character. It brings the whole scene before me; these dreadful people, and that terrible play, and what a picture! it comes back on me at nights in dreams, and I see their distorted faces, and the agonies of the poor creatures. And to think of these wicked, cruel, creatures fattening on the innocent! Such life and character, it is *too* graphic. That figure of the tight-laced man walking about is a portrait, and so is that of that cold-blooded Mr. D'Eyncourt. I have read it over two or three times to our little darlings, at least the portions they are likely to understand, and they laughed so. Mr. ——, our dear friend and benefactor, was greatly amused, and said in a joking way, we should see you turning gambler yourself, you were so violent against them. He took their part and said they were no more than a registered—just like any of our railway or banking-companies, who took the money of widows and orphans, and there was nothing said about it.

"Oh, how strange, how wonderful your meeting Grainger. Poor Grainger! I suppose I may call him now. *Indeed* I feel for him, and you can tell him so from me, for I have much to reproach myself about him. I was very foolish then and thought that amusing myself with gentlemen was the most entertaining thing in the world, as you said once to me, 'having a number of the scalps hanging at my waist.' Do tell him I hope he has quite forgiven me.

"Dearest, I write the above for you to show to Grainger. Do not, I conjure you, offend him in any way, for I *know*, which you cannot know, he never has forgiven me, or never will forgive me. I saw enough of him to know that he is vindictive; and indeed he threatened, the very last interview, that he would live to punish you, and *me*, through you. This, indeed, is making me most uneasy, and I do wish he was not there, or you away. But there is only ten days more, thank Heaven; so be very kind to him, or if you see that is no good, keep him at a distance."

My poor little Dora! What a wonderful head it has, peopled with nightmares. Let me point out to her the inconsistency of her previous little advice:

"Be very kind to him, and keep him at a distance." She must send me a recipe for this mysterious double duty; for, for the life, I don't know how to begin it. There is a smack of the country town in it; but I am afraid for the world its little advice is not of the soundest. Dearest, *affection* is your strong point, outside that charmed circle, I am afraid—but I won't say any more.

"Mr. B—— joins me in this warning. He says that everything that you have written about Grainger bears out what I fear. The man is trying to get an influence over you for ends of his own. He says it is transparently clear, and is going to write to you himself to be on your guard. He

has seen more of the world, dearest, and, as I say, he has entirely based his opinion on these little points, which he says 'were *unconsciously* revealed' in your diary."

Now, here again I must pause to give a little lecture to my pet. This history was meant entirely for her own gentle eyes; in it I unfold my most secret thoughts and speculations. I confess I did not think it would be exhibited to Mr. ——, benefactor as he is of mine, and as I must call him. Through every mind are coursing the strangest inconsistencies, wishes, plans, ideas, which one would be ashamed to admit the existence of to any one, save the dearest. *Outwardly* the wise man will not let such interior feelings affect his actions. So in future, I trust my darling won't exhibit my nonsense to any one, especially as it has brought me into discredit with Mr. ——, who, you see, has formed already rather a low opinion of my strength of mind. I am sorry he thinks so poorly of me, yet he is welcome indeed. For never, never can I forget the kindness he has loaded me with. He has saved my life, and saved our little home; for I shall return strong and healthy, please God. Still he does not know me, nor what a discipline I have subjected myself to all my life.

What oddities there are in these various foreign countries, and nothing more odd here than this—Homburg itself is quite Protestant, with about fifty Catholics or so; yet we walk across a few fields and we come upon a purely Catholic little village called Kirdorff, in which it is said there is not a single Protestant. In another direction three miles off, there is a village as purely Huguenot, composed entirely of French Protestants, who talk in some mysterious compound of old French and German. These, I say, seem what a precise English friend called "quite refreshing ethnological eccentricities." From Kirdorff comes news that a German archbishop is to preach and confirm on Sunday. It was a pleasant walk in the fresh air of a morning that seemed to hide its face coquettishly under a thin veil and whisper, "By-and-by you will see my face in all its splendour." A queer little German village of thick raw reds and greens which are so uncomfortable to look at, good houses built of very rude bricks and framework; but a really fine church with two tall spires. In this little spot, whose street winds and turns a great deal, they have tried in their honest simple way to do honour to their visitor. There are green triumphal arches of fir, surmounted each with a cross, and every house is festooned with green garlands of fir. The whole town was literally gathered in this handsome church; not a head was in any window; the men at one side, grim, rather gaunt creatures, and the women at the other side. It had all the air of a little village festival—innocent, pretty, fervent, with the rows of young girls in white and flowers, waiting for confirmation. Now the archbishop, a tall figure with a good massive head, is preaching with extraordinary earnestness, and gestures, and tones, which are really new and dramatic, and which at home might enliven some of our sermons. Then the rude German voices are raised in their favourite hymns, given out with stentorian power, moving slowly and lumberingly, but still with fine effect. I cannot but think if the gang of money changers yonder, whose rival temple I can see from the porch, who if they were driven out, as they shortly will be, would not scruple to set their infamous wheels and tables in this sacred precinct, should no other place be found. The contrast was indeed wonderful; but I am a little staggered by seeing next me a very notorious croupier, with his little boy and a hymn-book in his hand. The respectable name of "the Bank" I suppose has blinded him. I am glad to see all the carriages in Homburg have driven out to this form at Mortfleurs, and I can make out at the top some fair English girls who do not belong to that fold; but who look on with a respectful attention.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER IX. THE TENTH EARL.

HETHERINGTON HOUSE stands in Beaufort-square, forming one side of that confessedly aristocratic quarter. The house stands back in melancholy "grounds" of dirty gravel, brown turf, and smutted trees, while the dwarf wall which forms the side of the square, and is indeed a sufficiently huge brick screen, fences off the commonalty, and prevents them from ever catching so much as a glimpse of the Paradise within, save when the great gates are flung open for the entrance or exit of vehicles, or when the porter, so gorgeous and yet so simple, is sunning himself in the calm evening air at the small postern door. The Countess of Hetherington likes this brick screen, and looks upon it as a necessary appanage of her rank. When visitors, having exhausted every topic of conversation possible to their great minds, a feat which is easily performed in the space of five minutes, and beginning to fear the immediate advent of brain softening if not of idiocy, suddenly become possessed with a fresh idea after a lengthened contemplation of the wall in front of them, and with an air of desperation ask whether it does not make the house dull, Lady Hetherington says that, on the contrary, it is the only thing that renders the house habitable. She confesses that, during the time she is compelled to be in London, the sight of hack cabs, and policemen on their beat, and those kind of things, are not absolutely necessary to her existence, and as Sir Charles Dumfunk insists on her rooms facing the west, she is glad that the wall is there to act as a screen. Oh yes, she is perfectly aware that Lord Letterkenney had the screen of Purcell House pulled down and an open Italian façade erected in its place, the picture of which was in the illustrated papers, but as Lady Letterkenney until her marriage had lived in Ireland, and had probably never seen anything human except priests and pigs, the sight of civilised beings was doubtless an agreeable novelty to her. The same circumstances did not exist in her, Lady Hetherington's, case, and she decidedly liked the screen.

The Earl likes the screen also, but he never says anything about it, chiefly because no one ever asks his opinion on any subject. He likes it because it is his, the Earl of Hetherington's, and he likes looking at it as he likes looking at the coronet on his plate, on his carriage panels, and his horses' harness; at his family history as set forth by Burke and Debrett, and at the marginal illustrations of his coat of arms as given in those charming volumes; at his genealogical tree, a mysterious work of art which hangs in the library looking something like an enlarged "sampler" worked by a school-girl, and from the contemplation of which he derives intense delight. It does not take a great deal to fill Lord Hetherington's soul with rapture. Down in Norfolk villages, in the neighbourhood of his ancestral home, and far away in scattered cottages on the side of green Welsh mountains, where the cross-tree rears its inopportune head in the midst of the lovely landscape, and where smoke and coal-dust permeate the soft delicious air, his lordship, as landlord and mine-holder, is spoken of with bated breath by tenants and workmen, and regarded as one of the hardest-headed, tightest-fisted men of business by stewards

and agents. They do not see much, scarcely anything, of him, they say, and they don't need to, if he's to be judged by the letters he writes and the orders he sends. To screw up the rents and to lengthen the hours of labour was the purport of these letters, while their style was modelled on that used by the Saxon Franklin to his hog-hind—curt, overbearing, and offensive. Agents and stewards, recipients of these missives, say bitter words about Lord Hetherington in private, and tenants and workmen curse him secretly as they bow to his decree. To them he is a haughty, selfish, grinding aristocrat, without a thought for any one but himself; whereas in reality he is a chuckle-headed nobleman, with an inordinate idea of his position certainly, but kindly hearted, a slave to his wife, and with one great desire in life, a desire to distinguish himself somehow, no matter how.

He had tried politics. When a young man he had sat as Lord West for his county, and the first Conservative ministry which came into office after he had succeeded to his title, remembering the service which Lord West had done them in roaring, hooting, and yar-yaring in the House of Commons, repaid the obligation by appointing the newly fledged Earl of Hetherington to be the head of one of the inferior departments. Immensely delighted was his lordship at first, went down to the office daily, to the intense astonishment of the departmental private secretary, whose official labours had hitherto been confined to writing about four letters a day, took upon himself to question some of the suggestions which were made for his approval, carped at the handwriting of the clerks, and for at least a week thought he had at length found his proper place in the world, and had made an impression. But it did not last. The permanent heads of the department soon found him out, scratched through the external cuticle of pride and pomposity, and discovered the true obstinate dullard underneath. And then they humoured him, and led him by the nose, as they had led many a better man before him, and he subsided into a nonentity; and then his party went out of office, and when they came in again they declined to reappoint Lord Hetherington, though he clamoured ever so loudly.

Social science was the field in which his lordship next disported himself, and prolix, pragmatical, and eccentric as are its professors generally, he managed to excel them all. Lord Hetherington had his theories on the utilisation of sewage and the treatment of criminals, on strikes and trades unions—the first of which he thought should be suppressed by the military, the second put down by Act of Parliament—and on the proper position of women; on which subject he certainly spoke with more than his usual spirit and fluency. But he was a bore upon all, and at length the social science audiences, so tolerant of boredom, felt that they could stand him no longer, and coughed him down gently but firmly when he attempted to address them. Lord Hetherington then gave up social science in disgust, and let his noble mind lie fallow for a few months, during which time he employed himself in cutting his noble fingers with a turning-lathe which he caused to be erected in his mansion, and which amused him very much: until it suddenly occurred to him that the art of bookbinding was one in which his taste and talent might find a vent. So the room in which the now deserted turning-lathe stood was soon littered with scraps of leather and floating fragments of gilt-leaf, and there his lordship spent hours every day looking on at two men very hard at work in their shirt sleeves, and occasionally handing them the tools they asked for, and thus he practised the art of bookbinding. Every one said it was an odd thing for a man to take to, but every one knew that Lord Hetherington was an odd man, consequently no one was astonished, after the bound volumes had been duly exhibited to dining or calling friends, and had elicited the various outbursts of "Jove!" "Ah!" "Charming!" "Quite too nice!" and "Can't think how he does it, eh?" which politeness demanded, no one was astonished to hear that his lordship, panting for something fresh in which to distinguish himself, had found it in taxidermy, which was now absorbing all the energies of his noble mind. The receipt of a packet of humming birds, presented by a poor relation in the navy, first turned Lord Hetherington's thoughts to this new pursuit, and he acted with such promptitude that before the end of a week, Mr. Byrne—small, shrunken, and high-shouldered—had taken the place at the bench lately occupied by the stalwart men in shirt sleeves, but the smell of paste and gum had been supplanted by that of pungent chemicals, the floor was strewn with feathers and wool instead of leather and gilt-leaf, and his lordship, still looking on

and handing tools to his companion, was stuffing birds very much in the same way as he had bound books.

It was a fine sight to see old Jack Byrne, "Bitter Byrne," the ultra-radical, the sourest-tongued orator of the Spartan Club, the ex-Chartist prisoner, waited on by gorgeous footmen in plush and silk stockings, fed on French dishes and dry sherry, and accepting it all as if he had been born to the situation.

"Why should I quarrel with my bread and butter, or what's a devilish deal better than bread and butter," he asked, in the course of a long evening's ramble with Walter Joyce, "because it comes from a representative of the class I hate? I earn it, I work honestly and hard for my wage, and suppose I am to act up to the sham self-denial preached in some of the prints which batten on the great cause without understanding or caring for it—suppose I were to refuse the meal which my lord's politeness ends me, as some of your self-styled Gracchi or Patriots would wish, how much further should we have developed the plans, or by what the more should we have dealt a blow at the institution we are labouring to destroy? Not one jot! My maxim, as I have told you before, is, use these people! Hate them if you will, despise them as you must, but use them!"

The old man's vehemence had a certain weight with Joyce, who, nevertheless, was not wholly convinced as to the propriety of his friend's position, and said, "You justify your conduct by Lord Hetherington's, then? You use each other?"

"Exactly! My Lord Hetherington in Parliament says, or would say if he was allowed the chance, but they know him too well for that, so he can only show by his votes and his proxies—proxies, by the Lord! isn't that a happy state of things when a minister can swamp any measure that he chooses by pulling from his pocket a few papers sent to him by a few brother peers, who care so little about the question in hand that they won't even leave their dinner tables to come down and hear it discussed!—says that he loathes what he is pleased to call the lower classes, and considers them unworthy of being represented in the legislature. But then he wants to stuff birds, or rather to be known as a bird stuffer of taste, and none of the House of Peers can help him there. So he makes inquiries, and is referred to me, and engages me, and we work together—neither abrogating our own sentiments. He uses my skill, I take his money, each has his quid pro quo, and if the time were ever to come—as it may come, Walter, mark my words—as it *must* come, for everything is tending towards it, when the battle of the poor against the rich, the bees against the drones, is fought in this country, fought out, I mean, practically and not theoretically, we shall each of us, my Lord Hetherington and I, be found on our respective sides without the slightest obligation from one to the other!"

Joyce had come to look forward to those evening walks with the old man as the pleasantest portion of the day. From nine till six he laboured conscientiously at the natural history work which Mr. Byrne had procured for him, dull uninteresting work enough, but sufficiently fairly rewarded. Then he met his old friend at Bliffkins's, and after their frugal meal they set out for a long ramble through the streets. Byrne was full of information, which, in his worldly-wise fashion, he imparted, tinged with social philosophy or dashed with an undercurrent of his own peculiar views. Of which an example. Walter Joyce had been standing for five minutes, silent, rapt in delight at his first view of the Parliament Houses as seen from Westminster Bridge. A bright moonlight night, soft, dreamy, even here, with a big yellow harvest moon coming up from the back, throwing the delicate tracery into splendid relief, and sending out the shadows thick and black; the old man looking on calmly, quietly chuckling at the irrepressible enthusiasm mantling over his young friend's cheeks and gleaming in his eyes.

"A fine place, lad?"

"Fine! splendid, superb!"

"Well, not to put *too* fine a point upon it, we'll say fine. Ah, they may blackguard Barry as much as they like, and when it comes to calling names and flinging mud in print, mind you, I don't know anybody to beat your architect or your architect's friend, but there's not another man among 'em could have done anything like that! That's a proper dignified house for the Parliament of the People to sit in—when it comes!"

"But it does sit there, doesn't it?"

"It? What? The Parliament of the People? No, sir; that sits, if you would believe certain organs of the press, up a court in Fleet-street, where it discusses the affairs of the nation over screws of shag tobacco and pots of fourpenny ale. What

sits there before us is the Crœsus Club, a select assemblage of between six and seven hundred members, who drop down here to levy taxes, and job generally, in the interval between dinner and bed."

"Are they — are they there now?" asked Joyce, eagerly, peering with outstretched neck at the building before him.

"Now? No, of course not, man! They're away at their own devices, nine-tenths of them breaking the laws which they helped to make, and all enjoying themselves, and wondering what the devil people find to grumble at!"

"One of the governors of the old school, down, down at Helmingham"—a large knot swelled in Joyce's throat as he said the word, and nearly choked him; never before had he felt the place so far away or the days spent there so long removed from his then life—"was a member of Parliament, I think! Lord Beachcroft. Did you ever hear of him?"

The old man smiled sardonically. "Hear of him, man? There's not one of them that has made his mark, or that is likely to make his mark in any way, that I don't know by sight, or that I haven't heard speak. I know Lord Beachcroft well enough; he's a philanthropist, wants camphorated chalk tooth-powder for the paupers, and horse exercise for the convicts. Registered among the noodles, ranks A 1, weakly built, leaden-headed, and wants an experienced keeper!"

"That doctrine would have been taken as heresy at Helmingham! I know he came there once on our speech-day to deliver the prizes, and the boys all cheered him to the echo!"

"The boys! of course they did! The child is father to the man! I forgot, people don't read Wordsworth now-a-days, but that's what he says, and he and Tennyson are the only poet-philosophers that have risen amongst us for many years, and boys shout, as men would, at the mere sight, at the mere taste of a lord! How they like to roll 'your lordship' round their mouths, and fear lest they should lose the slightest atom of its flavour! Not that the boys did wrong in cheering Lord Beachcroft! He's harmless enough and well-meaning, I'm sure, and stands well up among the noodles. And it's better to stand anywhere amongst them than to be affiliated to the other party!"

"The other party? Who are they, Mr. Byrne?"

"The rogues, lad, the rogues! Rogues and noodles make up the blessed lot of senators sitting in your gimcrack palace, who vote away your birthright and mine, tax the sweat of millions, bow to Gold Stick and kiss Black Rod's coat-tails, send our fleets to defend Von Sourkrant's honour, or our soldiers to sicken of jungle fever in pursuit of the rebel Lollum Dha's adversaries! Parliament? Representatives of the people? Very much! My gallant friend, all pipeclay and padded breast, who won't hear of the army estimates being reduced; my learned friend, who brings all his forensic skill and all his power of tongue-fence, first learned in three-guinea briefs at the Old Bailey, and now educated up into such silvery eloquence, into play for the chance of a judgeship and a knighthood; the volatile Irish member, who subsides finally into the consulate of Zanzibar; the honourable member, who, having in his early youth swept out a shop at Loughboro', and arrived in London with eightpence, has accumulated millions, and is, of course, a strong Tory, with but two desires in life, to keep down 'the people,' and to obtain a card for his wife for the Premier's Saturday evenings—these are the representatives of the people for you! Rogues and noodles, noodles and rogues. Don't you like the picture?"

"I should hate it, if I believed in it, Mr. Byrne!" said Joyce, moving away, "but I don't! You won't think me rude or unkind, but—but I've been brought up in so widely different a faith. I've been taught to hold in such reverence all that I hear you deny, that——"

"Stick to it, lad! hold to it while you can!" said the old man, kindly, laying his hand on his companion's arm. "My doctrines are strong meat for babes—too strong, I dare say—and you're but a toothless infant yet in these things, anyhow! So much the better for you. I recollect a story of some man who said he was never happy or well after he was told he had a liver! Go on as long as you can in pleasant ignorance of the fact that you have a political liver. Some day it will become torpid and sluggish, and then—then come and talk to old Dr. Byrne. Till then, he won't attempt to alarm you, depend upon it!"

Not very long to be deferred was the day in which the political patient was to come to the political physician for advice and for treatment.

Beaufort-square looked hideously dull as Lord Hetherington drove through it on his

way to his home from the railway station a few days after the conversation above recorded, and the clanging of his own great gates as they shut behind him echoed and re-echoed through the vast deserted space. The gorgeous porter and all the regiment of domestics were down at Westhope, the family place in Norfolk, so the carriage gates were opened by a middle-aged female with her head tied up for toothache, and Mrs. Mason, the housekeeper, with a female retinue, was waiting to receive his lordship on the steps. Always affable to old servants of the family, whose age, long service, and comfortable comely appearance do him credit, as he thinks, Lord Hetherington exchanges a few gracious words with Mrs. Mason, desires that Mr. Byrne shall be shown in to him so soon as he arrives, and makes his way across the great hall to the library. The shutters of his room have been opened, but there has been no time given for further preparations, and the big writing-table, the globes, and the bookcases are all enswathed in ghostly holland drapery. The bust of the ninth earl, Lord Hetherington's father, has slipped its head out of its covering, and looks astonished and as if it had been suddenly called up in its night-clothes. My lord looks dismayed, as well he may, at the dreary room, but finds no more cheerful outlook from the window into the little square garden, where a few melancholy leaves are rotting in the dirty corners into which they have drifted, and where Mrs. Mason's grandson, unconscious of observation, is throwing stones at a cab. My lord rattles the loose silver in his trousers' pockets, walks up to the fireplace and inspects his tongue in the looking-glass, whistles thoughtfully, sighs heavily, and is beginning to think he shall go mad, when Mrs. Mason opens the door and announces "Mr. Byrne."

"How do, Byrne?" says his lordship, much relieved. "Glad to see you! Come up on purpose! Want your help!"

Mr. Byrne returns his lordship's salutations, and quietly asks in what way he can be of use. His lordship is rather taken aback at being so suddenly brought to book, but says, with some hesitation,

"Well, not exactly in your own way, Byrne; I don't think I shall do any more what-d'ye-call-ums, birds, any more—for the present, I mean, for the present. Her ladyship thought those last screens so good that it would be useless to try to improve on them, and so she's given me—I mean I've got—another idea."

Mr. Byrne, with the faintest dawn of a cynical grin on his face, bows and waits.

"Fact is," pursues his lordship, "my place down at Westhope, full of most monstrously interesting records of our family from the time of—oh, the Crusaders and Guy Fawkes and the Pretender, and all that kind of thing; records, don't you know, old papers, and what they call documents, you know, and those kind of things. Well, I want to take all these things and make 'em into a sort of history of the family, you know, to write it and have it published, don't they call it? You know what I mean."

Mr. Byrne intimates that they do call it published, and that he apprehends his lordship's meaning completely.

"Well, then, Byrne," his lordship continues, "what I sent for you for is this. 'Tisn't in your line, I know, but I've found you clever and all that kind of thing, and above your station. Oh, I mean it, I do indeed, and I want you to find me some person, respectable and educated and all that, who will just go through these papers, you know, and select the right bits, you know, and write them down, you know, and, in point of fact, just do——You know what I mean!"

Mr. Byrne, with a radiant look which his face but seldom wore, averred that he not merely understood what was meant, but that he could recommend the very man whom his lordship required, a young man of excellent address, good education, and great industry.

"And he'll understand——?" asked Lord Hetherington, hesitatingly, and with a curious look at Mr. Byrne.

"Everything!" replied the old man. "Your lordship's book will be the most successful thing you've done!"

"Then bring him to the Clarendon at twelve the day after to-morrow! As he's to live in the house, and that kind of thing, her ladyship must see him before he's engaged!"

"I suppose I may congratulate you, my boy!" said Byrne to Joyce, a day or two afterwards, as they walked away from the Clarendon Hotel after their interview, "though you don't look much pleased about it!"

"I'm an ungrateful brute," said Walter; "I ought to have thanked you the instant the door closed! For it is entirely owing to you and your kindness that I have obtained this splendid chance! But——"

"But what?" said the old man, kindly.

"Did you notice that woman's reception of me, and the way she spoke?"

"That woman? Oh, my lady! Hm—she's not too polite to those she considers her inferiors!"

"Polite! To me it was imperious, insolent, degrading! But I can put up with it!" And he added softly to himself, "For Marian's sake!"

A PEASANT WEDDING IN BRITANY.

On the crest of a high hill in the very heart of Britany—far from railroads, and where stage coaches are rare visitors, welcomed at long intervals—stands a quaint old village, nestling between copse and vineyard. A single jagged street staggers eccentrically from brow to brow; a line of tottering huts, moss-grown, mud-plastered, straw-thatched, stretches on either side; a curious little one-sided church, with square and toppling tower, rusted iron cross, shapeless windows, and obstinately crooked roof, stands in the centre; before which lies, worn by much use, the village lawn.

I was making the tour of Britany with my own horse and chaise, and climbed the long road which ascended to La Vertou, late in the afternoon of an autumn day, when the fruit of the ripe vineyards yielded a thick and delicious perfume to the air. On driving into the village street, and while directing my whole attention to the search for a possible village inn—for it was by no means certain that I should find such an institution—I was struck by a certain activity among the primitive folk, in contrast with the sleepy air of the other villages through which I had passed. The huts seemed to have emptied their whole population—old, middle aged, youthful, and infantile—into the road; there was fast talking and laughter. The good peasant people, too, were unusually well dressed; the men's hats were not quite so dirty and sun-tanned, their blue blouses not quite so crumpled, their shoes not quite so rough as I had been wont to see; the same was observable of the women's coifs, shawls, and chains. On the lawn, certain rustic games were going forward; at the doors of the shops, the gossips were gathered, in high glee. I observed one group, larger than the rest, which seemed to attract particular attention. A middle-aged peasant, with a hardy-looking woman by his side, closely followed by a younger couple, and behind them by a merry shoal of village lads and maidens, was passing from shop to shop, stopping a while at each. As the peasant approached the village merchant would advance, with great ceremony doff his hat and salute him and usher him and his troupe within; while the gossips would separate and allow the company to pass, and then crowd eager round the door. I was sorely perplexed to guess what this was all about.

There was the village inn at last, right under the little church, with a big elm in front, and seats around its trunk; an odd gable jutting out streetwards; and a smiling fat landlord and his buxom dame bowing and smirking in the doorway, happy to have a stranger guest. Horse and chaise were stowed away—where, I knew not, and know not to this day—my small quantity of luggage was deposited in the best room but one, and in a quarter of an hour I was seated at a simple, clean, and tempting table, with a bottle of capital wine at my elbow, and a plump roast fowl before me. As I was thirsting for company quite as much as for wine, I bade mine host sit at table with me and partake. I asked him (the calls of hunger partially satisfied) what saint's festival it was? Mine host laughed a slight respectful laugh, and with the French genius for repartee, replied:

"What saint, Monsieur? Why, Saint Matrimony, parbleu!"

He then proceeded to inform me that Nannine, the daughter of Picquet, the village sabôt maker, was to be wedded on the morrow to Jacques Blot, a thriving young farmer of the neighbourhood.

"You see, Monsieur, when a youngster among us falls in love with a lass, the first thing he does is to run to the village *tailor*. Monsieur, the village tailor is our notary, and keeps our family secrets, and makes our marriages. And Monsieur Poppeau, *our* village tailor, is one of your model hommes d'affaires. Dame! he is the hardest headed, most silent, profoundest, most persuasive man in France. Well, 'tis he to whom young Jacques resorted, to promote his suit with the pretty little Nannine. Monsieur Poppeau forthwith shoulders his broom."

"His broom?"

"Monsieur, the symbol of his errand. When one sees the broom coming, one knows that one's daughter is sought for, and is to be swept out of one's house. Monsieur Poppeau, broom on shoulder, repairs to Monsieur Picquet. The marriage contract is drawn by Monsieur Poppeau, who has, as perquisites, presents of blouses and franc pieces, a pair of stockings of different colours—worked by Nannine's fingers—and a place of honour at all the marriage ceremonies. Then comes the civil marriage, which you doubtless know about. But they are not tied yet, not by a good deal. For a fortnight, each goes back to his and her own house, works as usual, seldom sees the other beloved, and waits in patience—parbleu, how hard it is!—for the proper time to expire. This rather uncomfortable fortnight Jacques and Nannine have just completed; it was over to-day; and to-morrow they will be fairly tied by the ceremony of the church."

"But what was being done to-day?"

"Ah, to-day! Yes, they were buying the wedding presents. The two middle-aged folk you saw at the head of the procession were the father of Jacques, and the mother of Nannine: each of the young couple having but one parent

living. Just behind them, doubtless, was the young couple, bashfully following. The parents were going about, buying the presents; here a silk dress, there a fine lace coif, yonder some article of menage, or jewellery, or farmers' tools or stock. 'Tis a holiday for all the young people of the village. Some of them have been having a dance, with music, on the lawn; others, the more well-to-do, have been escorting Jacques and Nannine to the pâtissière and cabaret, where the happy couple have been treated to wines, fruits, and cakes; others have been following the parents from shop to shop, and bearing home the presents as they were purchased."

Mine host and I, our repast over, repaired to the little bench under the gable of the inn, and lighted our pipes. We had not sat there long, when the peasant whom I had noticed leading the procession—the father of Jacques—came up, followed by a merry troop of young villagers.

"He's coming to invite me to the wedding," whispered the landlord. Which he did. Then, turning to me with a profound salutation, Jacques's father remarked that he perceived I was a stranger, and hoped I would likewise honour him with my presence, not only to the ceremony, but to the succeeding festivities. I at once accepted the invitation.

"I beg Monsieur's pardon," said mine host, as I was about to ascend, candle in hand, to my chamber, "but if Monsieur would wish to see the marriage, he must rise very early. The curé will be at the altar by seven. I pray Monsieur to forgive my not giving him the best room. But it is a custom that the bridegroom should hire the best room of the inn the night before the wedding, for the musicians, who come from the city, twenty leagues away."

At six on the fresh October morning, I was dressed and at my simple breakfast of bread, fruit, and wine; and at ten minutes before seven I repaired with mine host and hostess to the village church. The slate-coloured dawn was just mellowing into day as we issued into the zig-zag street, and the little population were already astir, hastening in chattering groups towards the scene of the ceremony. They were crowding in at the door of the oddest little, one-sided, worn, and musty church you ever looked on: with ancient frescoes half obliterated, faded altar cloths, and feeble-looking candlesticks; at the upper end were two dim flickering tapers, their rays intercepted by the squat thick-set form (clothed in sacred attire) of the village curé; just below him was the village beadle, with enormous gaudy chapeau, shivering with cold; the curé holding in his sleek fat hands a well-worn book; the beadle, clutching his staff of authority.

Jacques and Nannine, clad in the newest and best apparel the village could afford, reverently approach the altar and kneel; their parents come after, and stand demurely behind. The rustic population is very quiet and attentive, and evidently impressed by the holy place. Then follows the stately Romish marriage ceremony, needless to describe. No sooner have the last intonation and the blessing passed the priest's lips than the auditory begin to chatter and laugh, to hurry up to bride and bridegroom and to shower honest and hearty kisses on them — in which the curé, by the by, is not slow to join. This over, the married pair and their especial friends follow the good pastor into the sacristy behind the altar. As a stranger, I am politely bidden to come too. Here, are spread some cold meat, bread, and wine, of which all, Nannine included, partake with lusty zest, and there is many a joke and there is much rallying, in which the priest is merriest of all.

The village folk have meanwhile been busy on the lawn outside. The grass has been rolled flat, and tables have been placed, and tents erected; the musicians have arrived, well mellowed with wine, and scratching on their fiddles in their impatience to begin. The wedding party, on emerging from the church, is greeted by a queer shrill yell, not unlike an Indian whoop—the Breton cheer; forthwith the musicians mount the table, take their places on round stools, and strike up. The bride and bridegroom proceed to mount a horse: she seated behind him, and clinging to his waist as prettily as possible: and they gallop around the green, to the great amusement and applause of the spectators, some half-a-dozen times. This traditional custom complied with, the marriage dances begin. Jacques and Nannine are at the head of the first set, opposite the parents; at the sides are the best friends. It is by no means easy to describe this rustic wedding dance. They leap and bound, entering into the sport as vigorously as they do into their daily work. They swing their arms about in ecstatic fury; the hair escapes from beneath hats and coifs, perspiration covers their foreheads, and their heavy wooden shoes thump and thump on the flattened grass. It was a very ancient dance, mine host told me, handed down from none knew how remote. 'Tis said that this, as well as the other rustic Breton dances, had a religious origin, far back in Druidic ages. The wedding dance is called the "gavotte"; its noticeable feature is, that the most expert dancer leads the rest off into numberless turnings and counterturnings, then abruptly stops and sets them all a-jigging, then rushes off with a sort of "walk round," then resumes his spiral course with a hop and a skip, the rest imitating his every movement with surprising quickness; the whole apparently, not really, performed at the leader's caprice. The dance is made yet more striking by a continual shouting and laughing, an enraptured throwing up of hands, and individual eccentricities and diversions. It is so exhausting that after a little, even the sturdy sons and daughters of the soil are fain to give up; and for awhile they leave the dancing ring to refresh themselves and rest.

Long rude tables have been set along the boundaries of the green, and now fairly groan with a bounteous provision of good things eat-

able and drinkable; monsieur the curé is already seated at the wedding table, with chairs for bride and bridegroom on either side of him. The exhausted but still noisy dancers flock eagerly about the board; it is amazing to see what wonderful morning appetites they have, and how soon the mass of good things disappears. Monsieur le Curé, under the influence of the punch and wine, grows astonishingly funny, is extremely gallant and attentive to the bride, and pledges everybody, even me the stranger guest. Then comes a loud noisy song, under the inspiration of which the dancers resume their places on the sward. This time it is another, and very different dance; you would think that, after the wine, it would be a wilder one than the first; no, it is a sedate movement, the faces of the dancers according with it. They separate into couples, and dance in a sort of procession, one behind the other; it is not unlike the fine old minute in Don Giovanni, only it has a rustic spice to it wanting in the stately aristocratic dance of our grandfathers. All day long alternate dancing, feasting, and singing is kept up, and still the marriage ceremonies are hardly begun.

The company separated a little before sundown, to unite again in front of the church soon after the grey light of twilight had thickened to darkness. The tents which had been erected were illuminated by a hundred waxen candles—and waxen candles, even in the chateaux of noblemen, are aristocratic in Britany. Within the tents were long tables, bounteously laden; without, large fires had been made, and there was every variety of cooking pot, and pitcher, and grill, and saucepan. The tent was, of course, that of the bridal party; and here, among others, were the curé, the doctor, the apothecary, the tailor, the postmaster, and myself. At the upper end of the tent was a little rudely constructed daïs, where the beaming Nannine sat; around her were gathered the favoured few, her intimates. Opposite, was the good fat curé, supported on either hand by a buxom rustic dame. When we had all taken our places at the festive board, I looked about for the bridegroom, Jacques, but could see him nowhere; presently, however, the reason was apparent. It is, on the occasion of "La Table de la Mariée," or "Bridal Feast," the custom that certain of the young men should act as butlers and cooks; these offices are assumed by the relatives and near friends of the bridegroom, and are posts of honour. The bridegroom himself performs the double function of chief cook and head butler; he himself is forbidden, by the law of tradition, to take a drop or morsel that night; it is his business to superintend the dishes intended for the bride, and to serve them up before her. So presently in he came with a huge platter, on which lay, in bounteous sauce, a portly turbot; this he deposited before the bride, who rose and bowed with smiling solemnity. Whereupon Monsieur le Curé sprang to his feet, and raising high his glass of brandy punch, called out, "To the bride!" A summons which no one refused, and which was responded to by a tumultuous jingling of glasses, tossing off of punch, and clapping of feet. It was an improvement on our Anglo-Saxon civilisation, that no speeches were made. But what an orgy succeeded! How shall I describe the noise, and the dancing, and the tipsy songs, and the rude lusty games: not to speak of the promiscuous hugging and kissing, and chasing and fondling which that never-to-be-forgotten scene presented? Of all the gallant company, dawn found the bridegroom, and him alone, sober. The demure and solemn tailor, though an unusually modest man, was painfully boastful of his share in bringing about the present occasion; Monsieur le Curé was now too sombre and dignified by half; and as for Jacques's steady papa and his familiars, the doctor, and the apothecary, and even mine host, they had, long before dawn, disappeared beneath the table, and were being slowly sobered, as morning came, by a bath of dew. The womankind had retired in high spirits; all except the bride, whom custom doomed to sit there on her daïs, bolt upright amid the revel, until the first rays of the rising sun should slant into the tent. Jacques had most certainly the worst of the fun. It was his task to carry the jaded roysterers home; and this he did with admirable patience and perseverance. But his reward, the taking home of his pretty spouse, was not even yet earned. The bride must, by inexorable Breton tradition, go home to her mother on the succeeding day; and the orgies must be resumed a second, and yet a third, evening. The second evening was like the first; all boisterousness, singing, shouting, kissing, and final collapsing under the table. The third resembled the two previous evenings, only in slang parlance, "more so;" for on the last, winding up orgies, the shouting and dancing were noisier, the kissing more vigorous, and the drunkenness more general, than ever. Jacques, now permitted to indulge with the rest in deep potations, made up for lost time, and was the very first to slide under the table, where he remained until morning.

There was a curious sight on the morning following the final evening, which was at once a traditional custom, and a scene characteristic of rural Britany. This was the "Beggar's Dance." The remains of the feast, wine and meat, were neatly set on tables in the middle of the green; and all the beggars of the neighbourhood were invited to partake. The villagers gathered in a ring around the space, leaving an opening toward the street. Presently there issued from a little lane a most grotesque procession. There were the halt, the blind, and the lame—the one-legged, the one-eyed, and the one-armed; the patriarchs and the children of mendicancy, ragged and shoeless, with hats crownless, and coats tailless, and gowns threadless; hobbling, and plunging, and limping along, with cracked songs, and yells, and the queerest imaginable movements. Arrived on the green they took position in couples, and performed a singular burlesque on the wedding

dance. This over, they fell to on the feast, with a will, being waited on by the chief dames of the village.

Finally, on the wedding-night—which is the fourth night after the wedding—all the friends of the bridal pair visit them as they lie in the nuptial couch. Each visitor brings a bowl of milk soup; and poor Jacques and Nannine must, bongré malgré, receive from every one a spoonful of that beverage. The young girls who thus visit the bridal chamber, secure the pins which have been used in the fastening of Nannine's shawl and gown, as a charm to bring them husbands.

PRECIOUS STONES.

If contingencies prevent your going to Corinth, you content your craving with a panorama of Corinth. If your poverty, but not your will, compel your remaining outside a travelling managerie, you may still have the pleasure of admiring the pictures. When you cannot enter a sweet-smelling cookshop, no law prevents your looking in at the window and sniffing the odours that exhale from below. And if you can't pick up diamonds like Sindbad the Sailor, nor incrust yourself with them like Prince Esterhazy, we advise you not to take the matter to heart, but to console yourself by contemplating them at a distance.

The Cook's Oracle, the Almanac des Gourmands, and Brillat-Savarin's Physiologie du Goût, have served a series of Barmecide feasts to many a compulsory abstainer. In like manner, those who cannot measure pearls by the pint, nor mark points at whist with unset brilliants, may gratify their tastes for gems by the instructive and interesting Natural History of Precious Stones and of the Precious Metals, which Mr. King has given to the world.

Doubtless, jewels are best beheld in situ; the situs, however, being neither the mine nor the matrix, but in their proper place, about some fair personage—which gives you the chance of admiring two beautiful things at once. A drawback is that family diamonds, like family titles, often fall to the lot of the oldest. Moreover, etiquette forbids young ladies to wear much jewellery, diamonds being especially tabooed. Nevertheless, wherever it may be, a good diamond necklace is a pretty thing to look at.

Independent of its surpassing beauty, the diamond strikes the imagination by its value. The re-cutting merely of the Koh-i-noor is said to have cost eight thousand pounds. Other grand diamonds have required a proportional outlay to bring out their intrinsic qualities. Even humble stones make good their claim to attention, and will not be passed by unobserved. In 1664, Mr. Edward Browne wrote to his father, Sir Thomas: "March 2. I went to Mr. Foxe's chamber in Arundell House, where I saw a great many pretty pictures and things cast in brasse, some limmings, divers pretious stones, and one diamond valued at eleven hundred pound."

That superstition and vulgar error should lay hold of so remarkable a natural object as the diamond, might be expected as a matter of course. The Romans, taught by the Indians, valued it entirely on account of its supernatural virtues. They wore the crystals in their native form, without any attempt to polish, much less to engrave them. Such, doubtless, was the ring whose diamond, "Adamas notissimus," had flashed in St. Paul's eyes at the momentous audience before the Jewish queen and her too-loving brother, in their "great pomp," and which afterwards, a souvenir of Titus, graced the imperious lady's finger in Juvenal's days. Pliny says the diamond baffles poison, keeps off insanity, and dispels vain fears. The mediæval Italians entitled it "Pietra della Reconciliazione," because it maintained concord between husband and wife. On this account it was long held the appropriate stone for setting in the espousal ring

From Pliny, also, we have the widespread notion that a diamond, which is the hardest of stones, is yet made soft by the blood of a goat—but not except it be fresh and warm. "But this," observes Sir Thomas Browne, "is easier affirmed than proved." Upon this conceit arose another—that the blood of a goat was sovereign for the stone. And so it came to be ordered that the goat should be fed with saxifragous herbs, and such as are conceived of power to break the stone. Another mistake, formerly current, is that the diamond is malleable, and bears the hammer.

There are facts respecting the diamond as strange as the fictions. Example, its constant association with gold, noticed long ago. Where gold is, there is the diamond. This rule breaks up the belief of the old lapidaries that diamonds are found only in the East Indies, and there even are confined to Golconda, Visapoor, Bengal, and Borneo. Diamonds have recently been discovered in most of our gold-yielding colonies, and probably will turn up in all. The coincidence or companionship of gold with diamonds can hardly be accidental, although all the diamond mines whose discovery is recorded have been brought to light in the pursuit of alluvial gold washings—which was notably the case with the oldest in the Serra do Frio, Brazil, and the most productive in the world.

South Africa has yielded diamonds enough to be an earnest of more to come. Australian "diggins" have already furnished a few, and will probably yield a vast supply when their gravel comes to be turned over by people having eyes for other objects than nuggets and gold flakes. In the Paris Exhibition of 1856, two diamonds were to be seen, found in the Macquarie river. In the Exhibition of Native Productions held at Melbourne, 1865, the feature that excited the greatest interest were numerous specimens (small, but undeniable) of the diamond from various parts of the colony. Finally, in last year's Paris Exhibition, Queensland diamonds were produced. Being still rough, unprofessional persons were unable to guess at the quality of their water.

The British Museum, amongst the native diamonds, exhibits an octahedral diamond attached to alluvial gold: and—strange confirmation of the ancient idea as to their affinity!—not only is the octahedron the primary crystal of that metal also, but all its secondary modifications exactly correspond with those of the diamond. Modern science has made no further advance towards a solution of this problem beyond that propounded as a certainty in the ancient Timæus. But without solving the problem, it is clearly worth while for persons likely to travel in gold-bearing regions to know a rough diamond when they see it. Otherwise, they may make ducks and drakes with pebbles that would pay for their preservation.

Two points determine the value of diamonds—their weight, which can be estimated in the rough, and their lustre, or water, which is less easy to judge of. An old treatise says, "The Water called Cœlestis is the Worth of all, and yet is somewhat difficult to discover in a rough Diamond. The only infallible Way is to examine it in the Shade of some tufted Tree. In Europe, the Lapidaries examine the Goodness of their rough Diamonds, their Water, Points, &c., by Daylight; in the Indies, they do it by Night."

The diamond is the only gem which becomes phosphorescent in the dark after long exposure to the sun's rays, or, Boyle says, after steeping in hot water. Dr. Wall, in the Philosophical Transactions, gives his "infallible method" of distinguishing diamonds from other stones. A diamond with an easy slight friction in the dark with any soft animal substance, as the finger, woollen cloth, or silk, appears luminous in its whole body. Nay, if you keep rubbing for some time, and then expose it to the eye, it will remain so for some time. The excessive hardness of the diamond is another extraordinary and superlative quality which sets it apart from most other known substances.

The history of individual diamonds is often strange and romantic. They have influenced the fortunes of families, dynasties, and nations. They bring with them luck, good or ill. Take the Pitt or Regent diamond, which was found at Puteal, forty-five leagues from the city of Golconda, and next to Mirgimola's (the "Mogul" Diamond) was the largest on record, weighing in the rough four hundred and ten carats.

Pride, they say, feels no pain; nor, sometimes, does poverty. The slave who found this precious pebble concealed it, as the story goes, in a gash made to receive it in the calf of his leg until he found an opportunity of escaping to Madras. There the poor wretch fell in with an English skipper who, by promising to find a purchaser for the stone on condition of sharing half the proceeds, lured him to his ship, and there disposed of his claims by pitching him overboard. A Parsee merchant of the name of Jamchund bought this wonderful specimen from the thief and murderer for the paltry sum of one thousand pounds, which sum he (the murderer) speedily squandered in debauchery, and, when it was finished, hanged himself.

Governor Pitt, of Fort St. George, Madras, states that he purchased it himself of Jamchund for twelve thousand five hundred pounds. Pope, to his annoyance, tried to rob him of the credit of doing so by assigning its acquisition to the agency of an "honest factor." To cut it into a perfect brilliant, in London, occupied two whole years, at a cost of five thousand pounds; which outlay was nearly covered by the value (three thousand five hundred pounds) of the fragments separated in shaping it. This operation reduced its weight to one hundred and thirty-six carats and seven-eighths, but made it, for perfection of shape as well as for purity of water, the first diamond in the world, which it still remains.

The fame of this incomparable jewel soon spread all over Europe. Uffenbach, a German traveller who visited this country in 1712, states that he made many fruitless attempts to get a sight of it. There was no obtaining an interview with Governor Pitt, its far from enviable possessor. So fearful was he of robbery (not without cause) that he never let be know beforehand the day of his coming to town, nor slept in the same house twice consecutively. During the next five years—that is, until after long negotiation the Regent Orleans relieved him of its custody in 1717—Pitt must have felt his too-precious stone almost as harassing a possession as its first finder did. He finally sold it for one hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds, a price considered much below its value; for, in the inventory of the Regalia, it is entered at twelve millions of francs, or four hundred and eighty thousand pounds.

In September, 1792, the great robbery of the Garde Meuble occurred. Together with the other regalia of France, the Sancy and the Regent diamonds were stolen. The former, being more convertible than its companion, was never recovered, although a diamond exactly answering to its description afterwards turned up. This robbery was effected under circumstances of great suspicion in respect to the keepers, who were supposed to have acted in the interest of the royal family. The regalia, including gold plate of almost incalculable value, had been sealed up by the officers of the Commune of Paris, after the massacres of the 10th of August. On the 17th of the following month, the seals were found broken, the locks picked by means of false keys, and the cabinets empty. The thieves were never discovered; but an anonymous letter directed to the Commune gave information where to find the Regent together with a noble agate chalice, the latter stripped of its precious gold mounting. Both these objects were too well known to be convertible into money without certain detection. Hence this politeness on the part of the thieves; but everything else had disappeared for ever.

Upon this diamond Buonaparte may be said to have founded his fortunes. It was verily the rock on which his empire was built. After the famous 18th of Brumaire, by pledging the Regent to the Dutch government, he procured

the funds indispensable for the consolidation of his power. After he became emperor, he wore the diamond set in the pommel of his state-sword; doubtless holding *that* to be a more significant article of his imperial paraphernalia than either crown or sceptre.

This remarkable gem exerted a direct influence in raising to the helm of government of two hostile nations: in one, the Corsican adventurer; in the other his renowned adversary, William Pitt, whose accession to the premiership would probable never have occurred but for the fortune based upon his great grandfather's lucky hit.

The Koh-i-noor has hitherto been a fatal jewel. May its recent recutting have broken the spell! Its history is well authenticated at every step. This stone of fate seems never to have been lost sight of from the days when Ala-ud-deen took it from the Rajahs of Malwa, five centuries and a half ago, to the day when it became a crown-jewel of England. Tradition carries back its existence in the memory of India to the year 57 B.C.; and a still wilder legend would fain recognise in it a diamond first discovered near Masulipatam, in the bed of the Godavery, five thousand years ago.

The Koh-i-noor is reported by Baber, the founder of the Mogul Empire, to have come into the Delhi treasury from the conquest of Malwa, in 1304. The Hindoos trace the curses and the ultimate ruin inevitably brought upon its successive possessors by the *genius* of this fateful jewel ever since it was first wrested from the line of Vikramaditya. If we glance over its history since 1304, its malevolent influence far excels that of the necklace for which Eriphyle betrayed her husband, or the Eguus Scianus of Greek and Roman tradition. First falls the vigorous Patan, then the mighty Mogul Empire, and, with vastly accelerated ruin, the power of Nadir, of the Dooranee dynasty, and of the Sikh. Runjeet Singh, when it was in his possession, was so convinced of the truth of this belief, that being satisfied with the enjoyment of it during his own lifetime, he sought to break through the ordinance of fate and the consequent destruction of his family by bequeathing the stone to the shrine of Juggernaut for the good of his soul and the preservation of his dynasty. His successors would not give up the baleful treasure, and the last Maharajah is now a private gentleman. In 1850, in the name of the East India Company (since, in its turn, defunct), Lord Dalhousie presented the Koh-i-noor to Queen Victoria.

Perhaps we should have been better without it; such, at least, appears to be Mr. King's opinion. The Brahmins will hardly relinquish their faith in the malignant powers possessed by this stone, when they think of the speedily following Russian war, which annihilated the prestige of the British army, and the Sepoy mutiny three years later, which caused England's existence as a nation to hang for months on the forbearance of one man.

The public saw the Koh-i-noor lustreless at the Exhibition of 1851, then weighing one hundred and eighty-six carats. Its re-cutting, performed in 1862, though executed with the utmost skill and perfection, has deprived the stone of all its historical and mineralogical interest. As a specimen of a gigantic diamond, whose native weight and form had been interfered with as little as possible (for with Hindoo lapidaries the grand object is the preservation of weight), it stood without a rival, save the Orloff, in Europe. As it is, in the place of the most ancient gem in the history of the world—older even than the Tables of the Law and the Breastplate of Aaron, supposing them still to exist—we get, according to Mr. King, a bad-shaped, because too shallow, modern brilliant, a mere lady's bauble, of but second-rate water, for it has a greyish tinge, and, besides, inferior in weight to several, being now reduced to one hundred and two carats and a half.

The operation of re-cutting was performed in London, under the care of the Messrs. Garrards, the Queen's jewellers, who erected for that purpose a small four-horse steam engine on their premises. It was conducted by Voorsanger and another skilful workman sent over by M. Coster from Amsterdam. In consequence of the advantage gained by using steam power, the actual cutting occupied no more than thirty-eight working days—a striking contrast to the two years necessary for cutting the Pitt diamond by the old hand process. In some parts of the work, as when it was necessary to grind out a deep flaw, the wheel made three thousand revolutions per minute.

Mr. King is equally full of pleasant lore touching other gems, as well as gold and silver. One emerald story has escaped him. It is told, if our memory is correct, by Forbes, in his Oriental Memoirs.

A person, whoever he was, was watching a swarm of fireflies in an Indian grove one moonlight night. After hovering for a time in the moonbeams, one particular firefly, more brilliant than the rest, alighted on the grass, and there remained. The spectator, struck by its fixity, and approaching to ascertain the cause, found, not an insect, but an emerald, which he appropriated and afterwards wore in a ring.

When the possession of a valuable is hard to account for, one tale may sometimes be as good as another—provided there be but a tale.

MAN OVERBOARD.

THE FIRST MATE.

Nor alone in the storm lurk the danger and the sorrow.
One evening, years ago, doing duty on the deck,
I heard a sailor shout, "Man overboard!" and looking
Over the calm Atlantic, saw him, floating dimly like a speck!
We could not stop the engines, going fifteen knots an hour,
Or throw him out a life buoy, so rapidly we sped;
But I caught, like a thought, his face to Heaven upturning,
And prayed for his soul as we left him with the dead.

THE PASSENGER.

Not alone in the sea do the men go down in billows.
I have seen such things on land mid the humble and the proud.
Men of mark and men of none, and leviathans of commerce
Go down in calmest weather, in the deep unpitying crowd.
A flutter and a plash, and a short expiring struggle,
As the great big Ship of Life roars, and steams, and rushes by:
Man overboard? What matters? The paddles roll for ever,—
'Tis the hand of Fate hath done it. Let him die!

NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES.

By Charles Dickens.

MR. BARLOW.

A great reader of good fiction at an unusually early age, it seems to me as though I had been born under the superintendence of the estimable but terrific gentleman whose name stands at the head of my present reflections. The instructive monomaniac, Mr. Barlow, will be remembered as the tutor of Master Harry Sandford and Master Tommy Merton. He knew everything, and didactically improved all sorts of occasions, from the consumption of a plate of cherries to the contemplation of a starlight night. What youth came to without Mr. Barlow, was displayed, in the history of Sandford and Merton, by the example of a certain awful Master Mash. This young wretch wore buckles and powder, conducted himself with insupportable levity at the theatre, had no idea of facing a mad bull single-handed (in which I think him less reprehensible, as remotely reflecting my own character), and was a frightful instance of the enervating effects of luxury upon the human race.

Strange destiny on the part of Mr. Barlow, to go down to posterity as childhood's first experience of a Bore! Immortal Mr. Barlow, boring his way through the verdant freshness of ages!

My personal indictment against Mr. Barlow is one of many counts. I will proceed to set forth a few of the injuries he has done me.

In the first place, he never made, or took, a joke. This insensibility on Mr. Barlow's part not only cast its own gloom over my boyhood, but blighted even the sixpenny jest books of the time. For, groaning under a moral spell constraining me to refer all things to Mr. Barlow, I could not choose but ask myself in a whisper when tickled by a printed jest, "What would *he* think of it? What would *he* see in it?" The point of the jest immediately became a sting, and stung my conscience. For, my mind's eye saw him stolid, frigid, perchance taking from its shelf some dreary Greek book and translating at full length what some dismal sage said (and touched up afterwards, perhaps, for publication), when he banished some unlucky joker from Athens.

The incompatibility of Mr. Barlow with all other portions of my young life but himself, the adamantine inadaptability of the man to my favourite fancies and amusements, is the thing for which I hate him most. What right had he to bore his way into my Arabian Nights? Yet he did. He was always hinting doubts of the veracity of Sindbad the Sailor. If he could have got hold of the Wonderful Lamp, I knew he would have trimmed it, and lighted it, and delivered a lecture over it on the qualities of sperm oil, with a glance at the whale fisheries. He would so soon have found out—on mechanical principles—the peg in the neck of the Enchanted Horse, and would have turned it the right way in so workmanlike a manner, that the horse could never have got any height into the air, and the story couldn't have been. He would have proved, by map and compass, that there was no such kingdom as the delightful kingdom of Casgar, on the frontiers of Tartary. He would have caused that hypocritical young prig, Harry, to make an experiment—with the aid of a temporary building in the garden and a dummy—demonstrating that you couldn't let a choked Hunchback down an eastern chimney with a cord, and leave him upright on the hearth to terrify the Sultan's purveyor.

The golden sounds of the overture to the first metropolitan pantomime I remember, were alloyed by Mr. Barlow. Click click, ting ting, bang bang, weedle weedle weedle, Bang! I recall the chilling air that passed across my frame and cooled my hot delight, as the thought occurred to me: "This would never do for Mr. Barlow!" After the curtain drew up, dreadful doubts of Mr. Barlow's considering the costumes of the Nymphs of the Nebula as being sufficiently opaque, obtruded themselves on my enjoyment. In the Clown I perceived two persons; one, a fascinating unaccountable creature of a hectic complexion, joyous in spirits though feeble in intellect with flashes of brilliancy: the other, a pupil for Mr. Barlow. I thought how Mr. Barlow would secretly rise early in the morning, and butter the pavement for *him*, and, when he had brought

him down, would look severely out of his study-window and ask *him* how he enjoyed the fun. I thought how Mr. Barlow would heat all the pokers in the house and singe him with the whole collection, to bring him better acquainted with the properties of incandescent iron, on which he (Barlow) would fully expatiate. I pictured Mr. Barlow's instituting a comparison between the clown's conduct at his studies —drinking up the ink, licking his copy-book, and using his head for blotting-paper —and that of the already mentioned young Prig of Prigs, Harry, sitting at the Barlovian feet, sneakingly pretending to be in a rapture of useful knowledge. I thought how soon Mr. Barlow would smooth the clown's hair down, instead of letting it stand erect in three tall tufts; and how, after a couple of years or so with Mr. Barlow, he would keep his legs close together when he walked, and would take his hands out of his big loose pockets, and wouldn't have a jump left in him.

That I am particularly ignorant what most things in the universe are made of, and how they are made, is another of my charges against Mr. Barlow. With the dread upon me of developing into a Harry, and with the further dread upon me of being Barlowed if I made inquiries, by bringing down upon myself a cold shower-bath of explanations and experiments, I forbore enlightenment in my youth, and became, as they say in melodramas, "the wreck you now behold." That I consorted with idlers and dunces, is another of the melancholy facts for which I hold Mr. Barlow responsible. That Pragmatical Prig, Harry, became so detestable, in my sight, that, he being reported studious in the South, I would have fled idle to the extremest North. Better to learn misconduct from a Master Mash than science and statistics from a Sandford! So I took the path which, but for Mr. Barlow, I might never have trodden. Thought I with a shudder, "Mr. Barlow is a bore, with an immense constructive power of making bores. His prize specimen is a bore. He seeks to make a bore of me. That Knowledge is Power I am not prepared to gainsay; but, with Mr. Barlow, Knowledge is Power to bore." Therefore I took refuge in the Caves of Ignorance, wherein I have resided ever since, and which are still my private address.

But the weightiest charge of all my charges against Mr. Barlow is, that he still walks the earth in various disguises, seeking to make a Tommy of me, even in my maturity. Irrepressible instructive monomaniac, Mr. Barlow fills my life with pitfalls, and lies hiding at the bottom to burst out upon me when I least expect him.

A few of these dismal experiences of mine shall suffice.

Knowing Mr. Barlow to have invested largely in the Moving Panorama trade, and having on various occasions identified him in the dark, with a long wand in his hand, holding forth in his old way (made more appalling in this connexion, by his sometimes cracking a piece of Mr. Carlyle's own Dead-Sea Fruit in mistake for a joke), I systematically shun pictorial entertainment on rollers. Similarly I should demand responsible bail and guarantee against the appearance of Mr. Barlow, before committing myself to attendance at any assemblage of my fellow-creatures where a bottle of water and a note-book were conspicuous objects. For, in either of those associations, I should expressly expect him. But such is the designing nature of the man, that he steals in where no reasonable precaution or prevision could expect him. As in the following case:

Adjoining the Caves of Ignorance is a country town. In this country town, the Mississippi Momuses, nine in number, were announced to appear in the Town Hall, for the general delectation, this last Christmas week. Knowing Mr. Barlow to be unconnected with the Mississippi, though holding republican opinions, and deeming myself secure, I took a stall. My object was to hear and see the Mississippi Momuses in what the bills described as their "National Ballads, Plantation Break-Downs, Nigger Part-Songs, Choice Conundrums, Sparkling Repartees, &c." I found the nine dressed alike, in the black coat and trousers, white waistcoat, very large shirt-front, very large shirt-collar, and very large white tie and wristbands, which constitute the dress of the mass of the African race, and which has been observed by travellers to prevail over a vast number of degrees of latitude. All the nine rolled their eyes exceedingly, and had very red lips. At the extremities of the curve they formed seated in their chairs, were the performers on the Tambourine and Bones. The centre Momus, a black of melancholy aspect (who inspired me with a vague uneasiness for which I could not then account), performed on a Mississippi instrument closely resembling what was once called in this Island a hurdy-gurdy. The Momuses on either side of him

had each another instrument peculiar to the Father of Waters, which may be likened to a stringed weather-glass held upside down. There were likewise a little flute, and a violin. All went well for a while, and we had had several sparkling repartees exchanged between the performers on the tambourine and bones, when the black of melancholy aspect, turning to the latter, and addressing him in a deep and improving voice as "Bones, sir," delivered certain grave remarks to him concerning the juveniles present, and the season of the year; whereon I perceived that I was in the presence of Mr. Barlow—corked!

Another night—and this was in London—I attended the representation of a little comedy. As the characters were life-like (and consequently not improving), and as they went upon their several ways and designs without personally addressing themselves to me, I felt rather confident of coming through it without being regarded as Tommy; the more so, as we were clearly getting close to the end. But I deceived myself. All of a sudden, and apropos of nothing, everybody concerned came to a check and halt, advanced to the footlights in a general rally to take dead aim at me, and brought me down with a moral homily, in which I detected the dread hand of Barlow.

Nay, so intricate and subtle are the toils of this hunter, that on the very next night after that, I was again entrapped, where no vestige of a springe could have been apprehended by the timidest. It was a burlesque that I saw performed; an uncompromising burlesque, where everybody concerned, but especially the ladies, carried on at a very considerable rate indeed. Most prominent and active among the corps of performers was what I took to be (and she really gave me very fair opportunities of coming to a right conclusion) a young lady, of a pretty figure. She was dressed as a picturesque young gentleman, whose pantaloons had been cut off in their infancy, and she had very neat knees, and very neat satin boots. Immediately after singing a slang song and dancing a slang dance, this engaging figure approached the fatal lamps, and, bending over them, delivered in a thrilling voice a random Eulogium on, and Exhortation to pursue, the Virtues. "Great Heaven!" was my exclamation. "Barlow!"

There is still another aspect in which Mr. Barlow perpetually insists on my sustaining the character of Tommy, which is more unendurable yet, on account of its extreme aggressiveness. For the purposes of a Review or newspaper, he will get up an abstruse subject with infinite pains, will Barlow, utterly regardless of the price of midnight oil, and indeed of everything else, save cramming himself to the eyes. But mark. When Mr. Barlow blows his information off, he is not contented with having rammed it home and discharged it upon me, Tommy, his target, but he pretends that he was always in possession of it, and made nothing of it—that he imbibed it with his mother's milk—and that I, the wretched Tommy, am most abjectly behind-hand in not having done the same. I ask why is Tommy to be always the foil of Mr. Barlow to this extent? What Mr. Barlow had not the slightest notion of, himself, a week ago, it surely cannot be any very heavy backsliding in me not to have at my fingers' ends to-day! And yet Mr. Barlow systematically carries it over me with a high hand, and will tauntingly ask me in his articles whether it is possible that I am not aware that every schoolboy knows that the fourteenth turning on the left in the steppes of Russia will conduct to such-and-such a wandering tribe? With other disparaging questions of like nature. So, when Mr. Barlow addresses a letter to any journal as a volunteer correspondent (which I frequently find him doing), he will previously have gotten somebody to tell him some tremendous technicality, and will write in the coolest manner: "Now, Sir, I may assume that every reader of your columns, possessing average information and intelligence, knows as well as I do that"—— say that the draught from the touch-hole of a cannon of such a calibre, bears such a proportion in the nicest fractions to the draught from the muzzle; or some equally familiar little fact. But whatever it is, be certain that it always tends to the exaltation of Mr. Barlow, and the depression of his enforced and enslaved pupil.

Mr. Barlow's knowledge of my own pursuits, I find to be so profound, that my own knowledge of them becomes as nothing. Mr. Barlow (disguised and bearing a feigned name, but detected by me) has occasionally taught me, in a sonorous voice, from end to end of a long dinner table, trifles that I took the liberty of teaching him five-and-twenty years ago. My closing article of impeachment against Mr. Barlow, is, that he goes out to breakfast, goes out to dinner, goes out everywhere high and low, and that he WILL preach to

me, and that I CAN'T get rid of him. He makes of me a Promethean Tommy, bound; and he is the vulture that gorges itself upon the liver of my uninstructed mind.

LITTLE ITALY'S SCHOOL-BELL.

"RINGLE-tingle-tingle-ring-ting-ting." *Now*, my little friends (says dame Progress, appearing at the door, her active fingers never ceasing their work, her eager eyes scanning the disordered legions), time, time! No more lying in the sunny corners, no more ruinous gambling with brass buttons, no more duckings and divings for the amusement of travelling boobies as idle as yourselves, begging, bickering, and leading of lives such as an intelligent street cur, if he had the chance, would proudly reject in favour of his own. Come in, I say, every boy of you, and listen to me. Gaetano, put on your shoes. Do that again, Luigi, and I'll——

Well, you have played at soldiers long enough, and—mercy, Giuseppe! what a cut the boy has got! "Fighting with the Roman fellow?" Served you right, then. You were brothers. "Thrashed him all the same, would you, if it hadn't been for the big French bully that always takes his part?" Well, you knew he *would* do so, and that he is three times your size! No more swimming-matches, nor sailing of boats, for the present. Remember what happened on the pond at Lissa, from going out without your corks. Boys of other schools are busy with their tasks, or amusing themselves with their own little games, and here's a beautiful opportunity for you and me. Antonio, and Pietro, stand apart. Giovenico, instead of egging them on, stand between them, and mind, my eye is upon you.

Something very dreadful has been publicly told of you lately—something, my boys, that might excuse what most of you are doing now, putting your fingers in your mouths, ashamed. Seventeen millions, out of twenty-five, that have not learned to read and write! I am quite shocked. If it had not been said by a statesman and a newspaper, that always speak truth, I could have hoped there was a mistake. It is horrible, and I don't think I can go on.

I need not ask you, children, whether you have ever heard the name of Giuseppe Garib—— Hush! You stun me. Shout when I've done. Well, this Giuseppe—too wise to be a statesman, too great to be a king—desiring to free you from the bondage of the most cruel and oppressive tyrant of the age—ignorance—seeks no allies but the liberal and enlightened heart, uses no weapons but those of peace and love.

He knows—and *we* know—that the strife is strong, and that the victory will be hard. For ignorance is slow to overcome, and has but too large a body of devoted adherents, whose interest it is that the tyrant should continue to hold the human race in thrall.

The war-note, however, has sounded. The battle has begun. You know what Giuseppe said, when they wrote to him that they were about to erect a statue to his honour. "While one child, in the district you govern, remains uneducated, raise no statue to *me*."

Now, my children, though reading, and writing, and the certainty that two and two are *four*—are excellent acquirements, as far as they go—(and that is, at present, far ahead of *us*) people cannot always live upon and by them. Know that your well-wishers do not limit their desires and efforts to teaching you these—to giving you the key of wisdom's treasure-chest—and leaving you, uncertain and bewildered, in the presence of her rich and varied store. They would—under that Providence which they pray may guide their judgment—become instrumental in directing yours.

Our Italy has many a school already, where such an education as I have described is lucidly and sedulously bestowed; but the task of the teachers seems to end where that which we propose to ourselves really begins. You must not alone be made reading and writing machines, but must be put in the way to become as you grow up, good husbands and fathers—good wives and mothers—good citizens, good soldiers, good men.

The idea suggested by Garibaldi has been understood and accepted in his own country; but, at present, that country is poor, oppressed with debt, laden with inevitable taxation. Good people, in countries blessed with peace and plenty, have come to our aid, and large-handed England, whose heart was with us in our fight for freedom, now assists us to realise the benefits that freedom brings.

Folks there are, I am told, who grumble, and demand *why*, seeing that there are still poor and ignorant people at home, the money is not all given to *them*. My boys, mankind is but one family. If the meal within the house has been but coarse and scanty, shall the beggar without be left to perish for need of the crumbs? When England, in a time of trial, received large gifts for her suffering thousands from France and America, I do not remember that any voice in those noble countries was raised against that generous recognition of the universal brotherhood of man.

It is the very success of liberal home efforts that has encouraged our English friends to give them a wider extension. In Ireland schools, such as those proposed for us, have been some time established. Not only have they answered their original benevolent end, but have attained another, not the least advantage of which is, that it silences the grumblers I have alluded to. *The schools support themselves.*

Boys and girls, is it not a better thing to live by the labour of your own honest hands—to become useful, active, intelligent beings—than to lie wallowing among the clods of the earth? I see by your attention that you are listening to me, and striving to comprehend what you are invited to do. Well, then, first, what is to be learned? I will tell you.

Boys: Reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, general and natural history, book-keeping, and singing.

Girls: All these good things, with the addition of cooking, the management of house and kitchen, washing, and needlework.

But it is not all work—for learning, though pleasant, *is* work—and therefore, besides all these, there will be, when funds allow, playgrounds for gymnastic exercises, stretching of limbs and muscles, and workshops for industrial instruction. Boys will be trained to gardening and general agriculture, as well as to the more essential trades—tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, &c.

Gradually this work will be turned to good account, independent of the instruction gained therefrom; for, if it has been found profitable in Ireland, surely in Italy, where there is a perpetual and ever-increasing demand for good laundresses, domestic servants, and skilled workers of every description, there will be plenty of work for the schools. It is consequently proposed to pay, not for your education only, but your partial board and clothing, from the actual work which, in part of your school hours, you will accomplish.

Thus, it is hoped, when all is in order, the produce of the afternoon work will defray the morning's teaching and the noonday meal. Let me hope that a spirit of independence will thereby be engendered among you, as a band of hearty comrades, providing, by the work of their own strong skilful hands, the means of mental advancement and the foundation of happy and contented, perhaps even prosperous and distinguished, lives.

By the by, I mentioned a "meal;" that is a thing of importance. I have not said enough about it. At half-past twelve (especially when I have been working cheerfully since breakfast), I begin to think how good a thing is polenta! Rice is not bad, but give me polenta! And polenta *with cheese*! I can only say that if King Victor himself, after a day with the chamois, desires anything more delicious, he hardly deserves to be your king.

I must warn you, however, children, that this cheese is a very uncertain sensitive thing. Idleness, noise (fighting especially), seem to frighten it away. Polenta may always come, but where there is goodness and industry, only *there* can you be sure of finding polenta, *with cheese!*

At our new school, at Cagliari, the first that will be opened on our system, you will find, in addition to large and well-lighted rooms, a pretty garden and orchard. There will be maps, books, pictures for illustration of what is taught, and many curious things never yet presented to your eyes, but of which you will quickly learn the use. A printing-press, a sewing-machine, patent machines for washing, wringing, and mangling, a plaiting-machine, and no less than a hundred and fifty boxes of toys! The greater part of these things have been provided by one generous hand—that of the president of the English committee, Mrs. Chambers—and, as fifteen schools in her native land already owe their well-being to her, let us hope that her countrymen will forgive the gracious finger she extends to *us*.

And now, children, one little last word, to which I require your best attention. Upon no human institution, however nobly meant or ably planned, can we hope a blessing to descend unless the principles of a pure and true religion are inculcated there. Now, to our walls, pupils of all creeds—Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, &c.—are alike welcome. But to accept the spiritual assistance of professed teachers of each several creed has been found so productive of disunion and mistrust, that it has been decided to decline the attendance of any, and to confide to the authorised teacher and the ladies of the visiting committee the all-important duty of religious instruction, founded, as it will be, upon the blessed truths of the New Testament.

For my part, I assent to the eloquent words of one whose voice will not again be heard on earth.

"In the better order of things, Heaven grant that the ministry of souls may be left in charge of woman! The gates of the Blessed City will be thronged with the multitude that enter in, when that day comes. The task belongs to woman; God meant it for her; He has endowed her with the religious sentiment in its utmost depth and purity, refined from that gross intellectual alloy with which every masculine theologist—save only One, who merely veiled himself in mortal and masculine shape, but was in truth divine—has been prone to mingle it."*

There, boys and girls of Italy—that is a long sentence, but it finishes my lecture. And now—all in to begin!

OLD LOVES.

THE Frenchman who said that we always return to our first loves, said one of the true things of human nature; and every mature mind knows its truth. We do return to our old loves, and no after affection ever destroys their place in our hearts.

There are abundant reasons for this going back upon life—at least in thought and desire if not in actual renewal. In youth, when our sensations were all new, and when the mere fact of living was in itself a joy, everything was painted in with rose colour: everything was perfect, and each emotion in its novelty was a veritable revelation of the divine. We had not then become blunted by satiety, chilled or corrected by experience. We firmly believed that what we felt, no one else had ever felt before, or would ever feel again with anything like our intensity; we firmly believed that all other people's emotions were tame and colourless beside our own. For youth is in itself a perpetual recreation of the primeval

* Hawthorne.

Adam, and each man lives for a time in a paradise of his own making, which no brother has ever shared. We and our special Eve dwell in it alone, for just so long a time as the fervour and inexperience of our first passion last. The pity is, that it lasts so short a time, and that we wake, while yet so young to the consciousness that all this exquisite delight is only delusion, and that "the mind sees what it brings" in love as well as in other things.

The love of a boy or girl is unique. It is never repeated in kind, though it may be even surpassed in degree; for the love of the mature heart is more powerful than that of the youthful; but the freshness, the ecstatic sense of certainty, the sublime belief in itself and its own immortality, in its unchangeableness and future, characteristic of the first young love, have no echo even in the strength and fidelity of the mature. Besides, it is so divinely blind; and its blindness remains, though the eyes may be couched to see everything else. Though our early charmer was snub-nosed and red headed, and fully half a dozen years our elder, yet our memory plays magic tricks with reality, and we think of her to this day, as we believed her at the time: beautiful, golden haired, and sixteen. If we have never seen her since that fatal hour when we tore ourselves from her side in an agony of despair at the cruel fate which sent us to New Zealand or the West Indies, no shock of personal experience has shattered the sweet falsehood of our boyish dreams, and she will always be to us what she was; but if we have seen her after our eyes have been couched, we stand aghast, as at the discovery of some Mélusine in her serpent state. That plain-featured, commonplace dowdy is no more the peerless Dulcinea of only ten years ago, than she is her own grandmother. Henceforth she is two persons: the one, living in memory: the other in actuality; and of the two the remembrance is the more real.

No one makes any allowance for the action of time in another, or expects to find any striking change, how long soever the interval between the last parting and the present meeting. An increasing waistcoat and a decreasing chevelure in ourselves, tell us beyond all question of an airy youth for ever fled, and a middle-aged respectability settled down heavily in its stead: yet we look to find our boyish ideal exactly where we left her, and heave no end of deprecatory sighs when we see the thickened jowl, the broadened waist, the puffy foot, the meagre wisp of greyish hair, sole remnant of those glorious tresses which might have been Godiva's. "Who would have thought it?" we say compassionately, forgetting the lesson set us daily by our own looking-glass. And then we turn our faces backward, and know that the Godiva of our early love is dead, buried ten fathoms deep by the almighty hand of Time, and that she has left only her memory to keep us company. But her memory is immortal, and over this Time has no kind of power.

Yet there are old loves for whom, when we have got over the first shock of disappointment at finding that forty is not as twenty was, we knit up the ravelled edges of time, and carry the past into the present — if in paler colours and a less florid pattern, yet with a joined thread that makes the two epochs one. Our love remains the same in essentials, with a difference in forms. A tender mellowness of affection has taken the place of the old fervid fiery passion which once consumed as much as it warmed, and we seem to have carried on into the present the whole accumulated strength of the past. Certain phrases, looks, and tones, remind us so vividly of bygone days that at last we lose all sharpness of perception, and can scarcely distinguish between then and now, till the past becomes the present, blended and inseparable, and the mind cannot recognise any break. We all know instances of the first love married after the severance perhaps of a quarter of a century, with two flourishing families in the mean time — instances where maturity has taken up the parable of youth, and life has doubled back upon itself, and ended at its starting place. Such reunions are not necessarily either happy or unsuccessful. It all depends on the amount of mental sympathy possible between the pair, after the warping of their diverse experiences, whether the memory of their youthful fancy can be consolidated into a living love or no. If the love have been very true and earnest, and if it have never failed, though it may have been overlaid and even forgotten, the chances are that the marriage will be happy; but say it has been only a fancy, without solid foundation in the inner chambers of the heart, and then the chances are the other way, and the look out is dubious. But even then, and at the worst, the luckless experimenters have the memory of the time when they thought they loved. At the worst, they can lay the blame on time and distance, and think: "Ah, well! if they had been married early in life, when they wished it, they would have fitted better than they do now; they would have each been more plastic, and by this time would have been welded together as well as wedded." But an adverse fate came in between, and hardened angles are the result.

There is something inexpressibly soothing to our failing vanity, in being with those who have known us at our best. "Ah! you should have known him twenty years ago," is a salve to many a man's mortification when a young and irreverent generation passes him by as an old fogey, not worth a thought—he who once charmed his club and commanded a following as large as a moderate sized constituency. And if this be true of men, it is still more so of women, who depend for social repute and influence more on their personal charms—which time ruthlessly handles—than on their intellectual acquirements, which are of tougher material, and not so soon frayed and torn. In fact, one of the best things about early marriages hangs on this point. The gradual carrying on into old age of the beauty and sweetness of youth, gives a kind of youth even to old age. A new husband would be ashamed to take about that

dear ugly old woman, and present her to the world as my wife; the choice I have made from among the hundreds of beautiful young creatures ready to my hand. But to her lawful proprietor she is as much her former self as her present; for the change has come so gently that he has not noticed how it came, and has never been shocked by it, as he would have been shocked by a sudden revelation. He loves her, both for what she was and what she is; and remembers how she lost this beauty which had once been so characteristic of her, and how that infirmity came upon her—when their child died, and she nearly broke her heart for grief—when he himself was ill, and when she nursed him and lost her complexion, and got a skin disease in consequence, which not all the skill and persistency of physicians can overcome. And remembering all this, he feels that there is an honour greater than mere skin-deep beauty even in her wrinkles and her loose lines, her stiff joints and her spoiled complexion.

Our feeling for places known and loved in early life—for the old home and conditions—is another form of returning to the old love. Such places come back to us in our dreams more frequently than persons return. We smell the pine woods and the bracken; we see the lake and the heather-clad hills; we are standing under the white cliff watching the sea come foaming and tumbling in as we used when we were children; or we are out in the grey of the morning, with that old dog at our heels; and we put up the little brown birds and the startled whirring pheasants as we used to put them up a long time ago. The burning glories of the American forests, the luxurious loveliness of the South, the romance of the East, the fervid life of the tropics, all are as nothing to us compared to one day of the "hard grey weather" of our youth, one hour of the sport and vigour of old times. Alas! we want to be young again, that is what our dreams mean; for, without youth, our return to those old loves is not practically satisfactory. How often, when we do actually go back home after a life spent elsewhere, our dreams vanish! We cannot climb the familiar crags as we used; we cannot stand the fatigue of a long day's partridge shooting through the stubble, or of grouse shooting on the moors; the oars are heavy and not so easily feathered as of old; our gun and rod are less manageable than they were; the young enthusiasm which cared no more for a ducking than it cared for a midge-bite, is washed away in the fear of the rheumatic pains sure to follow damp. Alas, for the frailty of the flesh in the presence of so much stoutness of soul! Sometimes, indeed, we are able to work the new vein opened up on the old ground, and to accept the former love in its altered relations with ourselves. We then content ourselves, like my Uncle Toby, with mimic repetitions of what we can never perform in their former fulness again; or we satisfy ourselves with watching what we cannot share. If we cannot climb those purple crags, our young ones can, while we wait down below, watching the sunshine and the shadow hurrying over them, and bringing out, or covering down, every jut and cranny, every patch of purple heather, or golden gorse, or tuft of waving fern, with the rapidity of a transformation scene. The love of nature increases with time, and grows by knowledge; the longer we stand by this great desk, the more we get to love the lessons learned on it, and to appreciate the value of the work it enables us to perform.

Old books, too, are old friends, to which we return with faithful loyalty. It is doubtful if any one who reads Gil Blas, Don Quixote, or the Thousand and One Nights, for the first time in mature life, ever has the same exquisite enjoyment of them as those who have read them, while young for the story, and when old for the art or the philosophy. Delightful they must always be to every one with brains; but they have lost that delicious aroma, that magic colouring, which the imagination of youth supplies out of its own richness.

On révient à ses prémiers amours in religion, too, as well as in other things—if not always, still often enough to furnish an example. The convert who has lived contentedly enough in his new faith, not unfrequently turns back to the old upon his death-bed, and dies in the creed in which he had been born—but had not lived. All of which gives us occasion to speculate, whether the mind be really independent, or only seemingly so, and whether first impressions are not of more importance than all the subsequent self-education acquired.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XI.

SATURDAY.—I am getting more and more entertained every hour with the spectacle here. Again I repeat there would seem to be no such dramatic touchstone to bring out human nature and human character. If one had but a window in every forehead! The strangest thing is the utter ignorance and wildness of these poor dupes, who play on without principle or approach to system. So simple, so easily attainable, and yet it occurs to no one. This morning *I win eight times in succession.* In spirit I mean. I paste the card in here as a little relic, and as a proof of my forecasting powers. The marks show when I played—I mean in spirit.

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My pet will see this at a glance, that the two colours really alternate in equal batches. Had I been one of the players—just to give you an idea of the easy way the money is made—I should have earned enough in ten minutes to have paid all our year's rent.

This morning, when we are all doing our procession at the wells, that agreeable man of God, the Dean of ——, comes up to me, with that smug obsequiousness which he has unconsciously got to exhibit to inferiors, from the habit of always addressing lords and baronets.

"I saw your name," he said, "in the Fremdenliste, and at once thought you must be one of the Edward Austens of Berkshire. Am I right—the member?"

"Yes," I said; "my father was Edward Austen, the member."

"Good gracious! I was sure of it. How wonderful are the ways"—he was going to add "of Providence!" but more decorously substituted, "the ways—ahem—we find people turning up!"

Of course he had not heard of my fall in the world, or, if he had, thought it was one of those genteel bits of ruin which don't affect people of condition. He was a great man at a charity sermon, and very strong "against Rome." We walked up and down together, he chattering all the time, with every now and again a nod and "How d'ye do?" to some one. After which he would get abstracted, and look after that lord uneasily—I think meditating whether there was likely to be a vacancy beside the lord, when *he* might join in. I remember a sermon by this dignitary of extraordinary warmth and power, on the text, "Go up higher," which, in his own life, he illustrated forcibly; and I believe the true bearing for him of the text was unconsciously this: "he that humbleth himself" was to do so, through the hope of being exalted. I dare say I do him wrong in this, for he was a charitable man; but certainly loved a lord a little too much. He asked me, "to make one of their party" at dinner at the Shepherdess, a mean, obscure place, which some irreverent people always called "that pot-house of a place," but where "the swells" were fond of planning dinners. Is not this the world all over? Some obscure spot or thing is taken up by "ladies of quality"—no matter what discomfort or stupidity follows—the world pronounces it *charming*, and would give their poor battered souls—the cheapest thing they have—to get there.

I went to the Shepherdess that evening, and found ten people at the dean's table. Only one lord—the salt of the earth—but certainly some "nice people," as he would call them. The dinner was bad enough, as, indeed, Mr. Boxwell, a hearty jovial member of parliament, said plainly.

"In fact, my dear dean, what surprises me altogether is to find you in this queer place at all."

"Find me here," repeated the dean—"find me here! Surely there are the nicest people—Lord ——, Lady ——, and Sir John; why, there is nothing queer about *them*."

"I don't mean that; but I was thinking of a sermon I have heard of yours, on 'Responsibility,' and all that, and how one preached more by simply not saying a word, than by regular sermons. A capital idea, by the way, which I wish was carried out in all our churches."

"Oh, that's all very well," said the dean. (I know these conversations amuse my pet, and I try to recollect scraps of them as nearly as possible.)

"In short, it is so droll to find all the good people gathered here—aprons, shovels, white ties, gaiters, high collars, holy faces—all clustered about a common gambling-house. You can call it Kursaal, and all that, and talk of the croupier and such dignified names; but we know, if the great Blanc himself took a scrubby room in St. James's-street, the police would just burst in, and drag him and his croupiers with unnecessary violence before Sir Thomas Henry, who would refuse bail."

I enjoyed this thoroughly. These are my own views, only put so much better. But the dean was a shrewd man, and when he saw we were all listening, said: "Oh, we come for our healths. We are ordered here, sir—our health. Those people have nothing to do with us. And, to tell you the truth, I don't look at it in that way at all. They tell me it is all perfectly fair and above board; and I *hear* the good they do, the sums they give away in charity, is something incalculable. The widows and the orphans of the place come to them, and never go away empty."

I was astonished to hear such careless language from a man in so responsible a position, and could not resist saying, "But how many a widow and orphan, Mr. Dean, have they made destitute? How many households have they filled with desolation? The ruin they have caused spreads over every land, and many and many are the

dismal messengers they have dismissed to English homes with hopeless news. No, their wretched alms, which they are *forced* to pay, is no compensation for this wholesale pillage."

I spoke warmly, and the dean looked at me with distrust. "That is all very good and sound, and we are all agreed, of course: but we must take things as we find 'em. These people found out the wells here, and worked 'em, and developed 'em. If I was inclined to a little sophistry or casuistry, Mr. Austen, I would ask you, wouldn't the myriads of rheumatic and dyspeptic fathers whom they have restored to health—the thousands of wasting daughters to whose cheeks the what-d'ye-call-'em—Le Wheez'un"—so he pronounced it—"Well has brought back colour; the number of homes it has made happy! Is not all this a sort of compensation for the weak-minded, demoralised gambler, whom they justly punish? And serve 'em right too. Now, Mr. Austen."

"That's putting it very well, dean," said the member, laughing; "and, if I don't mistake, Mr. Austen has benefited amazingly himself by the gambling waters."

"Oh, no," said the dean, "there is too much cant about all this. There, we must take them as we find 'em. My stockbroker, worthy man, gives money to schools, holds plates, and all that—but he gambles on the Exchange, and wins; and who does he win from? From some one who has, perhaps, lost his all. He made a hundred thousand pounds in Italian stock the other day. Some poor wretch sold in the panic, and was destroyed. Well. He bought *his* stock. Look at the merchants. Look at Lord ——, who made the last bishop, why he games on the turf. My good sir, if we're to go about setting right everything we see or *think* wrong, why the world might as well stop. We might all shut up. We must give and take."

I was indignant to hear such indifference from one in his sacred position—no heart, no earnestness—and I answered, warmly: "But, Mr. Dean, when we see this place crowded with holy—I mean with officially holy—men, is there not something more expected than giving and taking? What do we hear? Not a word, not a protest, not a denunciation of the wickedness going on about us; no thunderings from the pulpit. I cannot understand it. Surely, if we could suppose a Whitfield, or a Wesley, or a Knox, or a Luther were found here——"

"Heaven forbid!" said the member of parliament. "The place would get too hot for me! Come, we have had enough of this wine and of the Shepherdess; and to show that I quite approve of the dean's good sense, I am going up to the gambling-rooms now, to try what can be done with a napoleon."

As we went out the dean spoke to me very testily, as if he were sore and wincing under my thrust.

"You are a little too highflying, my friend," he said, "and not exactly cut out for a reformer. Believe me there is no harm in following the general consensus of leading men. You see all the distinguished personages here, lay and clerical, neither protest nor approve. They go their own way. Joshua was the only one who succeeded in stopping the sun. Above all, let us look at home, and keep a guard over ourselves. While you are busy giving directions, and helping the old ladies across the street, saving them from the omnibuses, you yourself may be run over."

And these are the pastors for the poor sheep of England; smooth words to make everything comfortable, and macadamise the road to salvation. This man is sure to be a bishop. Well, I shall say no more after *this*. He has taken no notice of me since.

CHAPTER XII.

MONDAY THE SIXTH. — The more I look about me in this strange world, and certainly in this strangest of places, the more do I feel that it is good for me *morally* to be here. For my weak but well meaning soul, it has the effect of bracing, nerving, cold water. I shall return home strengthened and invigorated. I am not at all sorry to have passed by these furnaces without being scorched. The man who shuts himself up, and turns away his eyes, is discreet, and if he knows himself to be weak all is right. Nay, a greater authority than I has written, he is *bound* to gird himself up and flee as fast as his poor tottering limbs can carry him. If I were a clergyman—a supposition I very often make, and there *was* some talk of it when I was a boy—I would ascend my pulpit, and preach eternally on this text. If you feel a spark of courage and strength, *face* the danger cautiously, practise, do as a man does who goes to a gymnasium and trains his muscles — begin to throw a half stone weight, and increases the amount by degrees. I would thunder this at the congregation until they began to think it was

a monomania, as I dare say she, whose eyes will be reading this by-and-by, may herself think. Or with more indulgence she will perhaps say, "My dear, I have heard Dr. Bulmer preach far worse." Well perhaps he has, and I have no business to be dressing myself up in a surplice—en amateur. But I say again this does me good, and it will do me good again to read it, and perhaps years hence strange eyes will fall upon it, and reflect, and own, perhaps a little comically, "Well, he is the first that has got sermons, not out of stones, which would be a limited range of subject; but out of roulette and the card table, and the wolfish eyes of 'hell keepers.'" There, darling, I won't preach again until further notice.

But the truth is, I am in a sort of elation, for I did more than mere rapid preaching this day. Speech may be silvern, silence golden, but *action* is, after all, a diamond. Going in this night to the roulette table, I see an unusual crowd, and faces showing that stupid interest and admiration which is about as sincere as that of the crowd who stand gaping at the foolhardy Blondin, or the reckless Leotard. Fifty per cent of that crowd has a lingering and secret aspiration, that it might, if a catastrophe *were* to be, be only present to see it. Here I find they are staring at a tall gay Englishman, a fresh good-looking fellow in some regiment, and whose honest health and loud *proclamation* of the tub every morning, contrasts with the yellow, dirty faces and the niggardly economy of soap, linen, &c., which *they* insinuate. His play is of the boldest, not laying the table broadcast with his gold as some foolish ones do; but with a sort of instinct selecting a number here, another there, and "bedding and potting" it, as some one said, with his gold. What I delight in is his contemptuous treatment of the crew of croupiers, whom he treats as though they were mere scavengers or night men, not fit to be addressed, or as you would a dependant. He tosses them his money insolently, and makes them arrange it for him, and if they are awkward, speaks to them with a haughty arrogance that seems to exasperate them. He has won with many pieces on Zero, he has hit the number again and again, and I see the brigands' eyes of the "hell keepers," glancing at him furtively, with anger and dislike, as though they were thinking, "Shall we 'set' him with some of our bullies as he goes home to his hotel, and strip him of what he has robbed us of?" Approving faces are bent on this darling, whom Fortune in one of her caprices dandles for a few seconds in her arms, like some pretty child, and then allows to drop on the pavement. The enamelled faces of the mermaids are turned towards him; and the rustling of their fins and tail is heard, as they come swimming round a new prey. I drew near to him, and heard him tell a friend behind, "I must have got more than a thousand out of them," and a voice that I know says, in its accustomed drawl, "Now is the time then, sack 'em, and you'll have the glory of being the first to break the bank this season." I knew it seemed intrusive, but I could not resist saying, in a low voice, "Now is the time to retire. Luck always changes."

The soapstone face was stretched round to look. "Oh! Grainger's friend," he said. "This is the gentleman I was telling you of, who has the system——"

"I have no system," I said, coolly.

"I was wrong, then, it seems," he went on. "The gentleman who preaches against the bank one day, and for his infallible system the next."

The young fellow was naturally not attending.

"Confound it!" he said. "The luck *is* turning. I have got nothing these last three turns. I'll take his advice, and carry off what I have bagged. Come, and let us count. Here's Grainger. Look here, Grainger, my boy!"

It was now about half-past eleven. Soon the mystic proclamation would be heard—"Aux trois derniers!" Grainger's eyes sparkled with an unholy fire of envy—possibly of disappointment, for I would not do him wrong—as he looked on the glittering treasure which the other was holding in his hand as though it were so much mould. But he turned to me suddenly.

"Here, Pollock, let me introduce a friend of mine—the hero of that little story which your brother knows."

I remembered there was a Captain Pollock in the regiment at *that* time, and I remember, Dora, being ludicrously jealous one night, at your dancing with him.

"Oh, indeed!" said the young fellow who had won. "I recollect. Poor Grainger was left out in the cold. But I tell you what; I'll stand a supper at Chevet's for the whole party—neat meat, neat wines, neat everything. Come, no excuse. The winner pays for all, and we'll count the cash between the courses."

Grainger was delighted. I don't set up to be a Puritan, as you know, Dora, and I always think of that saint with admiration, who used to play cards with a swearing and abandoned crew, and thus gradually acquired an influence over them. There again the complacency peeps out—an almost sacerdotal complacency. Precisely like a saint, am I not? But, again and again I repeat, this is all for your pretty eyes and my own ugly ones.

I went with them. I often say to myself, "On this day or on this night, let us have a little festival," when I have been good and deserve it; when I have been otherwise, I assure you I can be very stern and severe to myself. So we sat down and counted the gold, which was close on nine hundred napoleons. I own to a certain wrench and a yearning as I looked at it, and I think the amount of *unconscious* greediness—for we are all animals — in the three faces must have been overpowering. Two waiters afar off heard the chink—every ear learns that. They sniffed the dear metal as a vulture does carrion. Hungry gamblers looked up from their drink with ferocious envy. The owner alone was unconcerned.

"Confound the beggars! if I didn't think they'd swindle me, I'd have been as glad to have bank notes."

Here was the supper. D'Eyncourt—who to his other vices added that of gourmandise—spoke little and eat heartily. I confess to doing the same, and most gratefully do I owe my thanks to the Providence who has so restored me as to give me the power of enjoying moderately such things. What have I done to deserve these mercies, and not become like one of the worn-out beings who come here and drink with a faint hope of miraculously recovering their lost stomachs? We were very merry, Grainger specially so, and I suspected that the honest lad had helped his friend with a handful of what he had carried off. But D'Eyncourt's cat-like eyes fell on me several times, as if he was about to say something. He began, in his drawl:

"The more I see of you, Mr. Austen, the more you become a mystery to me."

I have put down some people before now, so I thought I would settle *him* before he went further.

"Curious," I said, "the more I see of you, the less you are a mystery; in fact, the first day I read you like a book."

Pollock laughed loud. "Hit you on the sternum, my boy, and right, too, though not flattering."

"Austen's mauleys come down hard when they do come down," said Grainger.

"What I was saying," said D'Eyncourt, in his slow impressive way (which I *do* envy him), as though he had not heard, as if he had stopped speaking to light his cigar, which was now all right—"what I say is, I don't quite understand your rôle—I mean the attitude you have to this bank. If you disapprove it, *I* should keep away—turn my back on Jericho—let the fiery sword do its work; but I certainly wouldn't shelter myself under their gorgeous roof, sit on their luxurious sofas, read their English newspapers, with such strong convictions. I'd be almost inclined to go to M. Blanc, the head of the thing, and tell him so boldly."

I was not sorry that he had begun in this fashion, and really wished to "tackle" him before them.

"I think," said I, smiling, "we can all imagine M. Blanc's polite and pleasant repartee, if any such well-meaning remonstrant were to present himself. But the fact is, I do *not* use their Times or their luxurious sofas and chairs; and as for their roof—well, I own to taking that barren advantage of them."

"Had you again—on the nob this time, D'Eyncourt," said the youth, who had already taken more wine than fitted him to be a nice judge of such effects.

"Do leave those low boxing metaphors aside, Mr. Pollock—at least among gentlemen. You mayn't be in such spirits tomorrow night. But"—turning to me—"you are not quixotic enough to expect that a still small voice like yours—I mean your conscience's—could make itself heard in this Babel? Have you such a sense of comical self-delusion that you can place yourself at that large doorway and turn back the mob of scoundrels, blackguards, roughs, cheats, jailbirds, lorettes — aye, and even decent men and women—with your faint expostulation? Do you tell us that?"

"No," I said, firmly; and then, as politely as I could, "but, first of all, suppose it was my whim; I am as much entitled to have that as any one here."

"Scarcely," he said. "As a rule, the gamblers never make themselves ridiculous."

"That's like having *you*, my friend," said the boy to me.

"But, apart from mere verbal quib-

bling," I went on, "at the risk of exposing myself to the suspicion of what is called *cant*—which, of course, is saying something that is *moral, or religious, or improving*——"

"Excuse me; the sayer being neither moral nor religious, *that* is cant. And you have saved me the trouble of coming to the point; for I believe that, unconsciously, you are at heart as great a gambler as any of them; and—don't be offended—you know the greatest rock is that air of self-righteousness—'Take heed that ye deceive not yourselves.'"

"Come, no profane quoting here," said the youth, gravely.

"There is no profanity," I said, laughing; "your quotation is not in Scripture." I was in great vein now, and began to feel myself a match for him. "But supposing, now," I went on, "I succeeded in interposing between two, or one even, and their destruction, why I am foolish enough to think it worth while coming so far for that."

"For Grainger, here?" he sneered. "A brand plucked from the burning. You are the neophyte, it seems, Grainger. Well, there is a class of missionary they call 'soupers,' and who have rather a suspicious class of converts. *You're* genuine. You're being brought to see the light, aren't you? Seriously," he added, turning to me, "you don't mean to tell us you have touched that rocky ground?"

"Seriously," I replied, impatiently, "I don't care to discuss such things with you."

"With all my heart, though I dare say our friend Grainger has been doing a little bit of the new regeneration—the softening of this stony heart, and all that. (There is a regular dialect for all that, which I profess myself not quite up to.) I can fancy him saying to you, 'What can I do? I am led on—dragged on. I have good intentions. I was virtuous once, and I would give worlds to be back in the old innocent times—the fields, the green, the buttercup—like *you*, in short.' Ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha!" roared the host. "Devilish good."

It *was* so like what Grainger had been saying, that I turned sharply and looked at him with surprise. He was looking at D'Eyncourt with quite a wicked glare.

"There is some devilish malignity always in your ideas, D'Eyncourt," he said—a speech that was certainly just and nicely descriptive. For he might certainly guess that I had, in my poor way and by the grace of one greater than I was acting through me, made some impression on Grainger; and this artful ridicule would be precisely a fashion that Satan himself would have suggested for throwing him back.

"Come away," said D'Eyncourt; "we've had enough. Let us go in and see these honest fellows counting their money. I hope they have got a good bag to-night; they work hard enough for it, God knows—harder than many a fellow at home on his sixpence a day, and deserve every coin they get. Good luck to them! I hope they've emptied many a fool's pocket."

As we went out Grainger whispered, "You don't mind what that snarler says. He'd sneer at his dead mother. I'm bad enough, God knows——"

"Don't say a word, Grainger," I said, taking his arm; "his speeches will have very little effect on me."

We walked in to see this curious scene. With all my prejudices, I own that there is no such dramatic scene in the round of modern plays—though, on second thoughts, this is poor praise—as at the end of the long and weary day to find "the band" sitting round and counting their gains. As soon as the last deal is over I know what will come. In rush the hired bullies in their tawdry liveries, carrying brass-bound strong boxes and bags, and a large case. Other emissaries emerge, and all, as it were, fling themselves on the table. Last arrive two or three cold "bank managers," cruel looking men, with the cat-like, clean-shaven, pitiless M. B., who, having been at work all day, is now in at the close, to superintend the finish, and, I suppose, gloat over an unusual booty. Everything here is more than characteristic. The henchmen artfully draw a sort of barrier of chairs, pretending to draw them away from the table, in reality a fence against *me* and other English gentlemen, whom they sapiently think are full of designs for pillage and sack, and note their ridiculously suspicious looks. But the robber naturally thinks every stranger one of his cloth. I would not contaminate my fingers with their gold, nor would I do as I often see some of our virtuous English do—go up obsequiously to "M. Le Croupier," and ask him to change their fifty-pound bank-note, which he does so charmingly, "spilling" out five glistening rows of gold in a second, and giving the full exchange, so different from the cormorant bankers in the town. "That gold, madam,

came from the pockets of the tempted, of the falling; it was stolen, perhaps, or should have gone to the destitute or helpless; some of the moisture of a frantic agitation and despair still clings to it: and you can stoop to *accept* from these men the wretched four *sous* profit or so on each pound, and chuckle over and talk of their courtesy. No. For *my* little changings I am content to pay the few *sous*, and be under no obligations to this vice partnership.

It is *really* dramatic, the scene now going on. Every one is busy. Servants are under the table, with a lamp, raking up every scrap of paper—the torn cards, flung down in disgust and despair—the broken-down systems, sifting them in the hope, not often deferred, of coming on the stray note or dropped louis. Most carefully do they pry into the emptied rouleau case, for very often at the bottom lurks the forgotten piece. But they all watch each other. Men are busy at the tables gathering up large handfuls of the pure silver pieces, and with amazing dexterity are covering the whole table with squadrons and squares of them—little heaps of five, and the heaps in rows of five, and the rows of five in squares of five. So with the gold—the sovereigns in rows, the napoleons and fredericks all in regiments and apart. The notes are laid out in rows of five also. Another is busy, not breaking up the rouleaux, but weighing them one against the other; and they are regularly laid out in the same way. The banking cashing gentlemen, with spectacles on, printed forms before them, and pen in hand, are ready; when, all being ready, the senior of the place suddenly appears, and, taking a rake, taps every square of silver, and counts aloud as he goes on; in perhaps a minute has totted up the whole. Down go the figures in the forms, and then the hirelings come with the strong boxes and vast pocket-books for the notes, and shovel in all the ill-gotten gains, which are locked securely with *three* keys and borne away. After a good day, the pinched-faced M. B. goes out smiling and joking with his friend and brother; and, later on, turning into the superb billiard-rooms, I see him astride on a chair watching his friends, full of merry jests, and smoking a cigar. At midnight, he will go home to his pretty villa and placens uxor, who will ask him how the bank fared to-day, and he will tell her gleefully what the winnings were. Of course he has a hundred or so of shares, and gets his seventy and eighty per cent. Think of that; think of all the villanies by which money is swindled from one man's pocket into another! The racing and betting man gets it from those who are as bad as he is, and who can afford it as well; even the housebreaker chooses the rich man's house for his swag; even the bandit will let the poor man free; but these wretches fatten on what produces the widows' tears and fathers' and husbands' curses. But I lose patience when I dwell on this, which, too, I cannot cure. If I was a zealous missionary at home, eager for "my Master's work," as they call it, I would not go out to the blacks, I would come here; I would stand at the door of this place; I would preach in the street, in front of this red sandstone palace—charnel house of infamy—and warn, dissuade, and exhort, passionately, with my whole heart and soul. *There* would be real saving of souls. Their gendarmes and police—I should have no fear of them. That good bluff king looks on them with no favour, and gives them a respite grudgingly. Utopian, some will say, of course, and smile. Nothing of the kind. But they would not have the courage. I solemnly declare, if I were in that profession, it is the thing I would do. One soul saved from that den, stopped at the threshold, would be worth all the blacks who ever simulated Christianity for a musket or two strings of glass beads. There *are* men in England—honest, zealous, ardent ministers—who would gladly seize on this idea: I want no copyright in it.

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A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER X. AN INTERIOR.

MARIAN ASHURST had begun, soon after their parting, to feel that she had been somewhat too sanguine in her anticipations of the immediate success of Walter Joyce. Each little difficulty she had had to encounter in her own life until the old home was left behind had aided to depress her, to force her to understand that the battle of life was harder to fight than she had fancied it, and had brought to her mind a shapeless fear that she had mistaken, overvalued, the strength and efficacy of the weapons with which she must fight that battle. Walter's letters had not tended to lift her heart up from its depression. His nature was essentially candid; he had neither the skill nor the inclination to feign, and he had kept her exactly informed. On his return home after his interview with Lord and Lady Hethering-ton, Joyce found a letter awaiting him. It was from Marian, written to her lover from Mr. Creswell's house, and ran as follows:

"Woolgreaves, Wednesday.

"MY DEAREST WALTER,—The project I told you of, in my last letter, has been carried out; mamma and I are settled for the present at Woolgreaves. How strange it seems, everything has been done so suddenly when it came to the point, and Mr. Creswell and his nieces turned out so differently from what I expected. I did not look for their taking any notice of us, except in the commonplace way of people in their position to people in ours. I always had a notion that 'womankind' have but a small share in men's friendships. However, these people seem determined to make me out in the wrong, and though I do not give the young ladies credit for more than intelligent docility, making them understand that their best policy is to carry out their uncle's kind intentions—that they have more to gain by obedience in this respect than to lose by anything likely to be alienated from them in our direction, I must acknowledge that their docility is intelligent. They made the invitation most graciously, urged it most heartily, and are carrying out all it implied fully. You will have been surprised at mamma's finding the idea of being in any one's house endurable, under the circumstances, but she really likes it. Maud and Gertrude Creswell, who are the very opposites of me in everything, belong to the 'sweet girl' species, and mamma has found out that she likes sweet girls. Poor mamma, she never had the chance of making the discovery before! I do believe it never occurred to her that her own daughter was not a 'sweet girl,' until she made the conquest of the hearts of these specimens. The truth is, also, that mamma feels, she *must* feel, every one must feel, the material comfort of living as we are living here, in comparison with the make-shift wretchedness of the lodging into which we shall have to go, when our visit here comes to a conclusion, and still more, as a *thoroughly known and felt* standard of comparison, with the intense and oppressive sadness, and the perpetual necessity for watchfulness in the least expense, which have characterised our dear old house since our sad loss. She is not herself aware of the good which it has done her to come here, she does not perceive the change it has wrought in her; and it is well she should not, for I really think the simple, devoted, grieving soul would be hurt and

angry with herself at the idea that anything should make any difference to her, that she should be 'roused.' How truly my dear father understood, how highly he prized her exquisite sensitiveness of feeling; he was just the man to hold it infinitely above all the strong-mindedness in the world! I am stronger-minded, happily—I wonder if you like to know that I am, or whether you, too, prefer the weaker, the more womanly type, as people say, forgetting that most of the endurance, and a good deal of the work, in this world, is our 'womanly' inheritance, and that some of us, at least, do it with discredit. You don't want moralising, or philosophising, from me, though, dearest Walter, do you? You complain of my matter-of-fact letters as it is. I must not yield to my bad habit of talking to myself, rather than to you on paper.

"Well, then we came to Woolgreaves, and found the heartiest of welcomes, and everything prepared for our comfort. As I don't think you know anything more of the place than could be learned from our summer evening strolls about the grounds, when we always took such good care to keep well out of sight of the windows, I shall describe the house. You will like to know where and how I live, and to see in your fancy my surroundings. How glad I shall be when you, too, can send me a sketch of anything you can call 'home.' Of course, I don't mean that to apply to myself here; I never let any feeling of enjoyment really take possession of me because of its transitoriness, you know exactly in what sense I mean it, a certain feeling of comfort and quiet, of having to-morrow what you have had to-day, of seeing the same people and the same things around, which makes up the idea of home, though it must all vanish soon. I wonder if men get used to alterations in their modes of life so soon as women do? I fancy not. I know there is mamma, and I am sure a more easily pleased, less consciously selfish human being never existed (if her share in the comforts of home was disproportionate, it was my dear father's doing, not of her claiming), and yet she has been a week here, and all the luxury she lives in seems as natural to her, as indispensable as the easy-chair, the especially good tea, the daily glass of wine, the daintiest food, which were allotted to her at home. I saw the girls exchange a look this morning when she said, 'I hope it won't rain, I shall miss my afternoon drive so much!' I wonder what the look meant? Perhaps it meant, 'Listen to that upstart! She never had a carriage of her own in her life, and because she has the use of ours for a few days, she talks as if it were a necessary of life.' Perhaps—and I think they may be sufficiently genuinely sweet girls to make it possible—the look may have meant that they were glad to think they had it in their power to give her anything she enjoyed so much. I like it very much, too; there is more pleasure in driving about leisurely in a carriage, which you have not to pay for, than I imagined, but I should be sorry the girls knew I cared very much about it. I have not very much respect for their intellects, and silly heads are apt to take airs at the mere idea of being in a position to patronise. Decidedly, the best room in the house is mamma's, and she likes it so much. I often see the thought in her face, 'if we could have given him all these comforts, we might have had him with us now.' And so we might, Walter, so we might. Just think of the great age some of the very rich and grand folks live to; I am sure I have seen it in the papers hundreds of times, seventy, eighty, ninety sometimes, just because they *are* rich; rank has nothing to do with it beyond implying wealth, and if my father had been even a moderately rich man, if he had been anything but a poor man, he would have been alive to-day. We must try to be rich, my dearest Walter, and if that is impossible (and I fear it, I fear it much since I have been here, and Mr. Creswell has told me a good deal about how he made his money, and from all he says it seems indispensable to have *some* to begin with, there is truth in the saying that *money makes money*), if that is impossible, at least we must not think of marrying while we are poor. I don't think anything can compensate to oneself for being poor, and I am quite sure nothing can compensate for seeing any one whom one loves exposed to the privations and the humiliations of poverty. I have thought so much of this, dearest Walter, I have been so doubtful whether you think of it seriously enough. It seems absurd for a woman to say to a man that she ponders the exigencies of life more wisely, and sees its truths more fully than he does, but I sometimes think women do so, and in *our* case I think I estimate the trial and the struggle there is before us more according to their real weight and severity than you do, Walter, for you think of me only, whereas I think of you more

than of myself, and as *one* with myself. I have learned, since I came here, that to understand what poverty really means one must see the details of wealth. We have only a general idea of a fine house and grounds, a luxurious table and a lot of servants. The general idea seems very grand and attractive, but when one sees it all in working order, when one can find out the cost of each department, the price of every article, the scale on which it is all kept up, not for show, but *for every day use*, then the real meaning of wealth, the awful difficulty of attaining it, realise themselves to one's mind. The Creswell girls know nothing about the mechanism of their splendid home, not much about even their personal expenses. 'Uncle gives us a hundred and fifty pounds a year, and tells us we may send him in any reasonable number of bills besides,' Maud told me. And it is quite true. They keep no accounts. I checked her maid's book for Gertrude, warning her not to let her servant see her ignorance, and she says she does not think she ever had some of the things put down. Just think of that! No dyeing old dresses black for mourning for them, and turning rusty crape! Not that that sort of thing signifies, the calculation is on too large a scale for such small items, they only illustrate the whole story of poverty. The housekeeper and I are quite friendly. She has a notion that ladies ought to understand economy, and she is very civil. She has explained everything to me, and I find the sums which pass through her hands alone would be a fortune to us. There are twenty servants in the house and stables, and their 'hall' is a sight! When I think of the shabby dining-room in which my dear father used to receive his friends—great people, too, sometimes, but not latterly—I do feel that human life is a very unfair thing.

"The great wide hall, floored with marble, and ornamented with pictures, and lamps on pedestals, and stags'-heads, and all the things one sees in pictures of halls, is in the centre of the house, and has a dark carved oak gallery all round it, on which numerous rooms open, but on the ground-floor there is a grand dining-room, and a smaller room where we breakfast, a billiard-room, a splendid library (all my father's books are in it now, and look nothing in the crowd); an ante-room, where people wait who come on business to Mr. Creswell (all his business seems to consist in disposing surplus money to advantage), and at the back of all, opening on the most beautiful flower-garden you can conceive, an immense conservatory. This is a great pleasure to mamma; there are no painful associations with *such* flowers for her; my father never gave her such bouquets as Gertrude brings to the breakfast-table every morning, and presents to her with a kiss, which her uncle seems to think particularly gracious and kind, for he always smiles at her.

"Indeed, he smiles a good deal at every one, for he is a very good-natured, amiable, and kindly man, and seems to think little of his wealth. I am sure he is dreadfully imposed upon—indeed, I have found out many instances of it. How happy he could make *us* if he would! I dare say he would not miss the money which would make us comfortable. But I must not think of such a thing. No one could afford to give so much as it would be *wise* to marry on, and we never should be happy if we were not wise. I don't think Mr. Creswell has a trouble in the world, except his son Tom, and I am not sure that he is a trouble to him—for he doesn't talk much about himself—but I am quite sure he ought to be. The boy is as graceless, selfish, heartless a cub, I think, as ever lived. I remember your thinking him very troublesome and disobedient in school, and he certainly is not better at home, where he has many opportunities of gratifying his evil propensities not afforded him by school. He is very much afraid of me, short a time as I have been here, that is quite evident; and I am inclined to think one reason why Mr. Creswell likes my being here so much is the influence I exercise over Tom. Very likely he does not acknowledge that to himself as a reason, perhaps he does not even know it, but I can discern it, and also that it is a great relief to the girls. They are very kind to Tom, who worries their lives out, I am sure, when they are alone; but 'schoolmaster's daughter' was always an awful personage in the old days, and makes herself *felt* now, very satisfactorily though silently. I fancy Tom will turn out to be the crook in his father's lot when he grows up. He is an unmannerly, common creature, not to be civilised by all the comfort and luxury of home, or softened by all the gentleness and indulgence of his father. He is doing nothing just now; he did not choose to remain with papa's successor, and is running wild until he can be placed with a private tutor—some clergyman who takes only two or three pupils.

Meantime, the coachman and the groom are his favourite associates, and the stable his resort of predilection.

"Do you remember the beech-copse just beyond Hill-side-road? The windows of my room look out in that direction, far away, beyond the Woolgreaves' grounds; I can see the tops of the trees, and the winding road beyond them. I go up to my room every evening, to see the sun set behind the hill there, and to think of the many times we walked there and talked of what was to be. Will it ever be, Walter? Were we not foolish boy and girl—foolish paupers? Ay, the word, hard, ugly, but *true*. When I look round this room I feel it, oh, so true! Mamma and I have a pretty sitting-room, and a bedroom each on opposite sides of it. Such rooms, the very simplicity and exquisite freshness of their furniture and appointments are more significant of wealth, of the ease of household arrangement, and the perfection of household service, than any amount of rich upholstery. And then the drawing-rooms, and the girls' rooms, and the music-room, and the endless spare rooms—which, by-the-by, are rarely occupied—for so rich a man, and one with such a house, Mr. Creswell seems to me to have singularly little society. No one but the clergyman and his wife has been since we came. I thought it might be out of delicate consideration for us that Mr. Creswell might have signified a wish for especial privacy, but I find that is not the case. He said to me to-day that he feared we found Woolgreaves dull. I do not. I have too much to think of to be affected by anything of that kind; and as my thoughts are rarely of a cheerful order, I should not ingratiate myself by social agreeability. Our life is quietly luxurious. I adhere to my old habit of early rising, but I am the only person in the house who enjoys the beauty of the gardens and grounds in the sweet morning. We breakfast at ten, and mamma and the girls go out into the lawn or into the garden, and they chat to her and amuse her until luncheon. I usually pass the morning in the library, reading and writing, or talking with Mr. Creswell. It is very amusing and interesting to me to hear all about his career, how he made so much money, and how he administers it. I begin to understand it very well now. I don't think I should make a bad woman of business by any means, and I am sure everything of the kind would have a great interest for me, even apart from my desire for money, and my conviction that neither happiness or repose is to be had in this world without it. The old gentleman seems surprised to find me interested and intelligent about what he calls such dry detail, but, just as books and pictures are interesting, though one may never hope to possess them, so money, though it does not belong to myself, and never can, interests me. Oh, my dearest Walter, if we had but a little, just a few hundreds of pounds, and Mr. Creswell could teach you how to employ it with advantage in some commercial undertaking. He began with little more than one thousand pounds, and now! But I might as well wish you had been born an archbishop. In the afternoon, there is our drive. What handsome houses we see, what fine places we pass by! How often I occupy myself with thinking what I should do if I only had them, and the money they represent. And how hard the sight of them makes the past appear! How little, falling to *our* share, would make the future smiling and happy!

"The girls are not interesting companions to Mr. Creswell. He is fond of them, and very kind to them—in fact, lavishly generous—they never have an ungratified wish, but how can a man, whose whole life has been devoted to business, feel much companionship with young girls like them, who do not know what it means? Of course, they think and talk about their dead parents—at least, I suppose so—and their past lives, and neither subject has any charms for their uncle. They read—especially Maud—and, strange to say, they read solid books as well as novels; they excel in fancy-work, which I detest, probably because I can't do it, and could not afford to buy the materials if I understood the art; and they both play and sing. I have heard very little good music, and I am not a judge, except of what is pleasing to myself, but I think I am correct in rating Maud's musical abilities very highly. Her voice thrills me almost to pain, and to see my mother's quiet tears when Maud plays to her in the dim evening, is to feel that the power of producing such salutary, healing emotion is priceless indeed. What a pity it is I am not a good musician! Loving music as you love it, dearest Walter, it will be a privation to you—if ever that time we talked of comes, when we should have a decent home to share—that I shall not be able to make sweet music for you. They are not fond of me, but I did not think they would be, and

I am not disappointed. I like them, but they are too young, too happy, and *too rich* for me not to envy them a little, and though love and jealousy may co-exist, love and envy cannot.

"In all this long letter, my own Walter, I have said nothing of *you*. You understand why. I *dare* not. I dare not give utterance to the discouragement which your last vague letter caused me, lest such discouragement should infect you, and by lowering your spirits weaken your efforts. Under these circumstances, and until I hear from you more decisively, I will say nothing, but strive and hope! On my side, there is little striving possible, and I dare not tell you how little hope.

"Your own,

"MARIAN."

To the strong, loving, and loyal heart of Walter, a letter from Marian was a sacred treasure, a full, intense, solemn delight. She had thought the thoughts, written the words, touched the paper. When disappointment, distress, depression, and uncertainty accumulated upon him most ruthlessly, and bore him most heavily to the ground, he shook them from him at the bidding of a letter from her, and rose more than ever determined not to be beaten in the struggle which was to bring him such a reward. The calmness, the seeming coldness even of her letters did not annoy or disappoint him; theirs was the perfect love that did not need protestation, that was as well and as ill, as fully and as imperfectly expressed by the simplest affirmation as by a score of endearing phrases. No letter of Marian's had ever failed to delight, to strengthen, to encourage Walter Joyce, until this one reached him.

He opened the envelope with an eager touch, his dark cheek flushed, and a tender smile shone in his eyes; he murmured a word of love as the closely-written sheets met his impatient gaze.

"A long letter to-day, Marian, my darling. Did you guess how sadly I wanted it?"

But as Walter read the letter his countenance changed. He turned back, and read some portions twice over, then went on, and when he concluded it began again. But not with the iteration of a lover, refreshing his first feeling of delight, seeking pet passages to dwell on afresh. There was no such pleasurable impulse in the moody re-reading of this letter. Walter frowned more than once while he read it, and struck the hand in which he held it monotonously against his knee when he had acquired the full unmistakable meaning of it.

His face had been sad and anxious when the letter reached him—he had reason for sadness and anxiety—but when he had read it for the last time, and thrust it into his breast-pocket, his face was more than sad and anxious—it was haggard, gloomy, and angry.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. MARLBOROUGH TO GLASTONBURY.

THE crow has a fair flight westward over the great Wiltshire plain, where the long chalk waves of the old sea bed are now covered with crisp short grass, which by turns the wild thyme purples, and the drifts of thistle-down whiten; and where, beside the graves of Danish kings, wheatears flit from ant-hill to ant-hill, and quick rabbits scud from thorn bush to thorn bush. It is a lonely wind-swept region, whose sentinels are the shepherds wrapped in soldiers' grey great coats, and moodily watching their flocks. Roman roads chequer the plain, British graves dot its surface, Druid circles stud its desolate regions. Old war-dykes traverse it in shadowy lines, marking the spots where Alfred smote the Saxon, or where he fell back towards the Somersetshire marshes, ready to pounce again upon their revelling camps. Sarsen stones and grey wethers point the way to the great temple of Stonehenge, and the haunted clusters of Druid altars at Avebury. Yonder, too, the crow sees here and there the wool-gatherers, those witch-like old women, who creep along the valleys of the Downs, wrenching from the surly thorn-bushes the tufts of wool the branches have snatched from the sheltering sheep.

The wind here, with a free and clear rush of thirty or forty miles, unimpeded by anything more resisting than a clump of firs or a rifle butt, comes laden with oxygen and life. As Mr. Ruskin says of the wind on the Yorkshire wolds, you can lean up against it. It is the most vitalising wind that races over England; and if it were not for the hard Wiltshire beer and the still harder cheese, one hardly knows how Wiltshire men could contrive to die, short of a hundred years old. Free down the land has always been here, free to the shifting flocks of starlings, free to the rabbit and the fox, free to the hare and the greyhound, free to the shepherd and the wool-gatherer. The Downs are quiet enough now—quietest of all on summer Sundays, when the village bells toss their music from valley to valley; quiet at sunset, when the Druid altars grow once more crimson, and the golden bars of the western sky rise like steps to the gate of Heaven, or the last fading rounds of that ladder on which the patriarch saw the angels ascending and descending. It was here round the

Wansdyke that in old time hard blows were struck by Dane and Saxon, Celt and Roman. Thousands of Romans, with skulls beaten in by British axes and bronze swords, lie peacefully under the thin turf of the Wiltshire Downs. The white horse standard was forced back here by Arthur's warriors at the crowning victory at Badbury. Those British villages, now mere rings of stone, mere dimples in the turf, were first torn down by the rough hands of men who had helped to destroy Jerusalem with Titus. Those Druid circles were once trodden by the white-robed priests, who urged on the scythed chariots against the Romans. The thrush pipes sweetly now from the wood, where once the yelling painted warriors rushed on the spears of Vespasian; and the mole burrows silently, where once the legionaries dug trenches to shelter themselves from the British slingers.

The crow remembers, as he flies from grassy camp to camp, many traditions of the plain, and of its dangers in former days, when Death often met the traveller in this great ocean of wild waste.

On a dark calm October night in 1816, the Exeter mail having traversed many miles of the plain, rattled at last in the dark up to Winterslow House, where the guard sounded his bugle and the coachman stopped. There was but a dim light at the inn, and the coachman had hardly pulled up his four smoking horses, when a dark shape suddenly leaped with a roar upon one of the leaders. No one knew what monster it could be. It seemed a horrible nightmare —the passengers leaped down panic-struck. Two dandies, awakened out of their sleep by the monster's roars of rage and fury, and by the horse's screams and neighs of angry terror, leaped out of the vehicle, dashed into the inn, and barricaded themselves in an upper room to bide the result, or at all events to keep death at bay as long as possible. A large mastiff belonging to the inn, eager for battle and careless of what the monster might be, leaped to the rescue, but was instantly killed. When lights came, it proved to be a lioness that had escaped from a caravan on its way to Salisbury fair. It had left the horse, which, striking out like a boxer with its fore hoofs pursued its retreating assailant and beat it to the ground. Presently the keeper arrived, and, accustomed to tame such beasts, forced the lioness by blows and threats into an outhouse, where it was secured.

Floating above Lady Down, the crow notes that the spot is remarkable for the apparition of a headless lady, who, centuries ago, was slain there by her injured husband, who overtook her as she was flying from him with a lover. But on the downs, towards Marlborough, a Wiltshire tradition of the highwaymen times compels the crow to alight on the stone that records the fact. One dark night at the beginning of this century, when pistols were as regular travelling furniture as cigar cases are now, a Wiltshire gentleman, riding over the downs beyond Hungerford, was attacked by two thieves on foot—a short grim man and a tall savage man. His pistols missed fire, but the traveller having a stout heart and a strong arm, drove back the fellows with the heavy butt-end of his riding whip, and eventually, after a tough fight, beat down the shorter of his two enemies. After a further tussle the taller man also threw up the game and fled. The traveller, resolute on retaliation, pursued him fast, but the man was swift-footed fear gave him wings, and though the moon had just risen, he contrived to dodge about in and out of Roman encampments, behind bushes and old earthworks, so as to evade for a long time the keen and unrelenting pursuit. Hour after hour the pursuit and the flight continued, till, just towards daybreak, the traveller caught the tired rogue in the open, and pushed him to his full speed. A lash of the horse and he gained on him. Nearer and nearer now, till at last in a far valley of the downs he ran in on him, and leaping off his horse threw him heavily to the ground, grasped his throat, and bade him surrender. The man made no resistance, no curse broke from him, no cry for mercy. He was dead! His heart had broken. Like a hunted hare, he had died of fatigue before the hounds' teeth could meet in him.

From Inkpen Beacon, the highest chalk hill of England, and just south of Hungerford, the crow looks down from his airy height on the spot where in 1856 the last bustard was caught. This clumsy bird, the ostrich of Europe, was once common on the Wiltshire downs, where it could stride and stalk as it used to do before the drum drove it away from the plain of Chalons. It used to be run down with greyhounds, but its flesh hardly repaid this singular chase. In 1805, one of these strong birds, four feet long and very powerful in the claws and beak, attacked a horseman near Heytesbury, treating the genus homo as an intruder on its wild domain. The bustard is now all but extinct.

That brave mansion of the Pophams, Littlecot, whose mullioned windows overlook the valley of the Kennet, is the scene of the old legend of Wild Darell, which Scott tells in the notes to Rokeby. One night, in the reign of Elizabeth, a midwife was sent for out of Berkshire. The pay was to be light, the groom said, but the woman must be blindfolded, and must ask no questions and tell no tales. She consented, and mounted behind the man, who took her a long rough ride over the downs. She lost all sense of direction or distance. At last she arrived at a house, was shown up a grand staircase, and performed her duties. When they were ended, the tapestry lifted, and a ferocious man entered: who seized the new-born child, dashed it under the grate, destroying it as ruthlessly as if it had been a wolf's cub. The woman returned unhappy, and brooding over the murder. She bore the agonies of remorse for some time, but at last was driven to tell the secret and free her conscience. She went and confessed the matter to a magistrate. Had she any clue? Yes, she had counted the number of stairs up which she had

been taken, and she had secretly and unobserved torn off a piece of the bed-curtain. Enquiries were made, suspicion fell on Wild Darell of Littlecot, and stern men came searching the old house. Darell was seized, but the judge was bribed, and the proof was insufficient. The murderer escaped the sword of justice. But Heaven, however, he could not escape; for he soon afterwards fell, while leaping a stone stile in hunting—still called "Darell's death place"—and broke his neck.

Over the downs outside Marlborough, the crow skims for a moment to Badbury camp, alights with a sidelong waft to pick up a stray tradition. It was in this great double ring of ditch and rampart, with a fifty foot fall and an area of two thousand feet, that the Britons held out for a whole day against the Saxons. At sunset, the Saxons, with a last tremendous rush, stormed the camp, and, crashing in with their axes, conquered the last British stronghold in Wiltshire.

The crow now drifts into Marlborough, that quiet scholastic town, so sheltered by the great bluffs of chalk that gird it round. That handsome red brick building, now the college, has quite a history of its own. The central part of it is a fragment of the "Great House" built by Sir Francis Seymour, a grandson of the Protector, who was created Baron Seymour, by Charles the First, during the Rebellion; for Marlborough was a royal town, and had its rubs in those times. In 1643, Sir Neville Poole seized the great house, and held it with his men in buff, for the parliament. The year before, Wilmot had stormed and burnt the town, and sent John Franklin, the popular member, and several of the leading townsmen, prisoners to Oxford. In 1644, Charles himself came and held his quarters at Marlborough Castle. In Queen Anne's time the Earl and Countess of Hertford kept house here, and entertained many of the great writers. Pope, bitter and invalided, came here and wrote verses, and Thomson of the Seasons was staying here while he wrote his Spring. The other sections of his great composite poems were written at Richmond and in London.

A tradition of the old posting days still lingers in Marlborough. In 1767, the year before the great Earl of Chatham, stricken down by age and infirmities, resigned his place in the cabinet, the great orator, seized with gout on the road to London, was compelled to remain at the Castle Inn at Marlborough. Wilkes tells us of his eagle eye, the fascination of his glance, and the unquenchable fire in his glowing words. The haughty and imperious old statesman remained shut up in his room here for many weeks, and we picture to ourselves the proud old man with the attributes Wilkes describes, terribly testy at the delay, and chafing at the vexatious disease, and the fuss of over-servile landlords and over-zealous country Ollapods. Although so proud that he never transacted business but in grand official costume, it was not the first time the earl had given audiences in bed. During this visit, which must have set Marlborough talking, everybody who travelled on the great west road was astonished to find the town overflowing with footmen and grooms in the earl's livery. What a retinue! It was fit for a king. The fact was, it was only a trick of the old proud earl, who insisted that during his stay every waiter, stable boy, and odd man at the Castle Inn, should wear his livery.

Beyond Marlborough, across the downs are the great Druidic temple of Avebury, the Devil's Den, and the mysterious artificial hill of Silbury. Avebury, the centre of all Druidic tradition, is older than even Stonehenge. At Avebury there are twenty-eight acres covered by Celtic graves, and huge Druidic stones. From the adjacent hill you see them strewing the ground everywhere, like flocks of sheep; and in the distance down the last ridge of the downs, towards Bowood and Savernake Forest, runs the waving line of the Wansdyke, the old rampart frontier of the Belgæ. In 1740 two avenues of two miles in length led to the central Avebury circle of one hundred unhewn stones, enclosing two more double concentric circles. They were then supposed to be emblems of the serpent, which was a symbol of the sun. Six hundred of these stones have been destroyed, built up in walls, and hedges, and cottages. Only about a dozen now remain in their old places. The old church of Avebury stands near these relics of a forgotten superstition, and triumphs over their decay.

Theorists in Indian Celtic mythology have gone stark-staring mad about these stone circles, older than Stonehenge. "A temple of the sun, obvious to the meanest capacity," cries one. "Temple of the sun be hanged, learned idiot," writes another; "this is a Druid cathedral, a patriarchal temple built ages before the mere stone-rings of Cornwall, the hallowed altars of Dartmoor, or the processional avenues of Britany." "Incompetent blockhead," screams a third. "Why, Silbury Hill was the Druid's Ararat, and these stones are emblems of Noah's Ark and the patriarchal altars!" But the strangest winged hippogriff of a hobby-horse that ever trod Cloudland is ridden by Mr. Duke, who contends that Wiltshire was treated by the Druids as the ground plan of a vast planetarium or astronomical map. These same Druids, who worshipped the god of thunder and adored the oak and the mistletoe, laid out the whole range of downs in planetary regions, in which the sun and planets were represented on a meridional line from north to south—a position from which the ancients believed the planets had started at the beginning and would return at the end of the world, when they had run their course. The earth itself was represented by Silbury Hill; the sun and moon by the great circles of Avebury, Avebury being a Phœnician word for "the mighty ones." The ecliptic by the avenues, or the Serpent. Venus by a stone circle at Winterbourne Basset; Mercury by Walker's Hill; Mars by an earthwork at Marden, in the Vale of Pewsey; Jupiter by Casterley Camp on the edge of Salis-

bury Plain; and Saturn by the great blocks at Stonehenge. The Druids, who brought Eastern learning to Europe, were great astronomers, Mr. Duke says, and represented numerical and astronomical cycles by these Avebury stones. He will have it that the numerical cycles were compounds of the mystic number four, sacred as an emblem of the four letters by which the name of the Supreme Being was expressed in the early languages. The one hundred stones of the outer ring were four, twenty-five times repeated, and the four hundred of the avenue one hundred four times repeated, whilst the thirty stones of the outer ring of each double circle represented the lunar cycle, or days of the month, and the twelve of the inner the months of the year.

In this way Wiltshire became a great fossil almanack, and the priests, perambulating the county before Moore and Zadkiel had conferred their boons on the world, could know and reckon the proper days for observing religious festivals. After all these puzzle-brain theories, the result is no great enlargement of knowledge. They just leave us with a confused notion that the circles might have had some obscure astronomical meaning, and that is all. It is even uncertain whether Silbury Hill was cut into its present geometrical form, or was built up by manual labour. It is nearly as high as St. Michael's Mount, covering more than five acres of land; and it has been calculated that even in these days navigators could not build it up for less than twenty thousand pounds. It was long thought to be the burial mound of the founder of Avebury; but it has been twice opened—first in 1777, and afterwards in 1849, and no trace of any interment could be found. Many think its name implies that it was sacred to the god Sul or Sol, as St. Anne's Hill was to Tanaris, the god of thunder. There is no tradition about Avebury; but the story at Stonehenge is that no one can count the stones twice alike. When Charles the Second was waiting there for the friends who were to conduct him to the coast of Sussex, where a vessel was lying off for him, he counted the stones to beguile the time, and refuted the vulgar error to his own satisfaction.

The old legend of Stonehenge was, that the stones were brought from Africa to Ireland by giants, and that Merlin, by his incantations, floated them across the sea to please King Ambrosius, the last British king, who wished to commemorate the massacre on Salisbury Plain of Vortigen and three hundred of his nobles by Hengist the Saxon. In the middle ages Stonehenge was called "the Giant's Dance." At Stanton Drew, a Druidical ruin near Bristol, the legends of the old stone-rings grow more grotesque. A giant is said to have thrown one of the stones from a neighbouring hill, and the chief circle is supposed to consist of the petrified bodies of a wicked wedding party, who *would* dance on Sunday, and to whom the Devil presented himself as piper, leading them a pretty dance, and ending by leaving them turned into pillars of stone

Glancing on through Wiltshire, the crow rests on the highest weathercock of Devizes, the old town, so called, as tradition says, from its having been formerly divided between the king and the bishop. There is a curious inscription on the market cross, which records a warning to dishonest traders. In 1753 a woman, named Ruth Pierce, came with two neighbours from the Vale of Pewsey, to buy, with their combined money, a sack of wheat. When her companions paid Ruth did not lay down her money, though she asserted she had. They loudly accused her, and she then wished she might drop down dead if she had not paid. She had scarcely uttered the words before she fell down and expired; and in one of her clenched hands, the missing money was found.

It was the Bear Inn at Devizes, that the father of Sir Thomas Lawrence kept; and here the handsome boy learnt to draw likenesses and recite poetry. The father was a restless, desultory man, who had been a solicitor, a poet, an artist, an exciseman: "everything by turns, and nothing long." His life had been a web of unfinished schemes and incomplete studies. Proud of his son, he used to appear in powdered periwig and clean ruffles, to ask his guests whether Tom should recite to them from the poets, or draw their likenesses? Garrick used always to stop at the Bear, to hear the speeches Tom had learned since the last time; Prince Hoare, Sheridan, Wilkes, and Lord Kenyon, all praised and patronised the pretty boy who had painted his first portrait at six. Lord Kenyon used to describe the door bursting open, and the child dashing in riding on a stick. He was asked if he could take the gentleman's likeness? "That I can," said the boy, "and very like too." The restless father soon threw up the posting-house, and settled at Bath: where Tom became renowned for his crayon likenesses, and his portrait of Mrs. Siddons.

The crow from the top of Roundway Hill looks down on the scene of the defeat of Sir William Waller by Lord Wilmot in 1643, of which Clarendon has left us a fine sketch. After the battle of Lansdown, the royalists under the Marquis of Hertford and Prince Maurice, fell back on Devizes, followed by Waller, who invaded the town and erected batteries. The town was open then, without the least defence but small hedges and ditches, in which cannon were planted. The avenues were barricaded to stop the puritan cavalry. The Earl of Crawford, trying to send powder into the town, was driven off with the loss of his cannon. The town was in imminent danger. The musketeers had only one hundred and fifty pounds weight of match left; but they collected all the bed cords and beat and boiled them in saltpetre; they then took heart, Lord Wilmot being at hand. He soon arrived with fifteen hundred horse and two small field pieces, which he discharged, to give notice to the town of his arrival. In the meanwhile Waller was too confident; he had refused terms to the cavaliers, and had written to the parliament, to say that by the next post he would

announce the number and quality of the prisoners. He drew up his men on Roundway Hill, with all Wiltshire and Gloucestershire spreading in a blue mist before him. Wishing to prevent the town from joining Wilmot, Waller, "out of pure gayety," left his advantage, his firm reserve, his well flanked cannon, and his fortress hill, and bore down on Wilmot. Haslerig's cuirassiers made the first charge at Sir John Byron's regiment, but they were worsted by the cavaliers, and driven back. Then Wilmot broke the other divisions one by one, and hurled them back, a rabble of wounded men and frightened horses, towards the Cornish foot that now broke from the town and attacked the puritan pikemen and musketeers, turning their own cannon upon them. The flight was terrible over the hills, and the pursuit arduous; many rolled down into the valley and perished. Oliver's Castle and the Wansdyke saw many a death grapple. The rout was complete. The Cornishmen were relentless. The puritans lost nearly two thousand men, slain or prisoners, and Waller fled to Bristol, leaving his guns, ammunition, and baggage. That defeat was the cause of great heart-burnings between Waller and Essex, Waller thinking himself betrayed and deserted by Essex, who had let Wilmot march unimpeded from Oxford; Essex, reproaching the poet with unsoldierly neglect and want of courage in letting himself be beaten by a mere handful of men without cannon—men, too, against whom he had never led a single charge in person.

A long swift flight, and the crow is in pleasant Somersetshire. Passing high over grand old church towers and snug homesteads, he furls his wings at the foot of the Mendip Hills, and descends on the cathedral towers of Wells. In the hall of the bishop's palace, the last abbot of Glastonbury was tried for refusing to surrender his abbey to Henry the Eighth. It was a mock trial, worthy of the tyrant; for the abbot was accused of appropriating the church plate; and although acquitted, was seized on his return to Glastonbury, dragged to the top of the Tor, and there put to death. This is the same proud abbot who is said to have defied the king, who had threatened to burn his kitchen, by building that strange edifice still to be seen at Glastonbury: square without, octagonal within, and with a pyramidical roof supporting a pierced lantern to let out heat and vapour. "I will build such a kitchen," said the abbot, "that all the wood in the royal forests will not suffice to burn it." Modern antiquaries, however, unfortunately have proved the building to be far older than Whiting.

A short flight to Glastonbury Abbey brings the crow to congenial ruins, shattered pillars, and ruined arches. Yonder is Wearyall Hill, where the monkish legends say that Joseph of Arimathea rested after his long pilgrimage from the Holy Land. Here, planting his thorn staff in the ground, he decided to abide: the green meadows, the swelling hills, and the pleasant orchards of Somersetshire soothing his wearied spirit. In the abbey gardens, a graft from the saint's staff still grows, and flowers at Christmas—proof of its miraculous origin.

It was at Glastonbury that, in Henry the Second's time, was discovered the supposed grave of King Arthur. Here in Avalon, girt by marshes, they found the hero in a rude oak coffin, sleeping beside his guilty but repentant queen, whose long yellow hair crumbled to dust when a monk snatched at it. The bones were deposited in a magnificent shrine, by Edward the First, and placed before the high altar.

Glastonbury was a great place for saints. St. Patrick and St. Benedict were abbots at Avalon, and to the doubtful saint—St. Dunstan—in some crypt here as he worked as a smith, constructing cross and chalice for holy uses, the Devil appeared one day at the half door in the shape of a beautiful woman. It was here that the saint waited till he had got his tongs red hot, and then made a rush and caught the tempter by the nose.

Now, the crow rises for a further flight, turns his head westward, and strikes out across the broad green pastures for Sedgemoor and the borders of sunny Devonshire.

ALASKA.

During the earlier part of last year, public attention was for a short time devoted to the Russian settlements in North America. The course of politics at home happened not to run over smoothly just at that time, so there was little inclination to inquire into the affairs of other countries. Usually eager to criticise, and that sometimes with scant charity, the actions of our friends on the other side of the Atlantic, a strange reticence seemed then to prevail among us. With the exception of a few leading articles in the London papers, Russian America was transferred to the United States, without one murmur of assent or disapproval from this country. While thus in England little interest was felt in the question, in America it was far different. There, it was taken up as a party question, and treated as most party questions are. The natural advantages and disadvantages of the country, were alternately exaggerated by either side. While the friends of Mr. Seward described it as a paradise of fertility, his opponents declared it to be "the fag end of creation." In spite of the ridicule and satire which beset his every step, Mr. Seward carried his point. On the 30th of October, 1867, Russian America, or Alaska, was formally transferred to the United States. So little was really known of the resources of the country at that time, that those who spoke so strongly, to use no harsher word, for or against its acquisition, must have relied more on their imagination than on fact. Indeed, very little is known about it, even now; but the information that has come to light in the interim, has shown that truth lay between the opposing parties. If Alaska be not "an Elysian field," it is certainly not "a worn-out colony."

To its former owners it must have been of small advantage. An outlying colony subject to the frequent attacks of discontented Indian tribes, and therefore expensive to hold, is not a very desirable possession. It is not, then, strange that the Russian government was very glad to sell it. The enterprising American has now taken the place of the slow Russian. The careless servants of the fur company have been succeeded by settlers keenly alive to their own interests, ready to work out the natural resources of the country to the utmost, and to develop the trade that languished in the hands of their predecessors. Even now, the country presents marks of considerable improvement. Sitka, the capital, bears witness to the energy of the new inhabitants, who have settled there in such considerable numbers that the price of land has more than doubled.

Alaska lies to the north-west of British Columbia; and that part of it that is south of the Yukon river very much resembles the latter colony in soil and climate. In looking at the map, we can scarcely realise the fact that the area of Alaska is about four hundred thousand square miles, or almost equal to twice that of France. Alaska was discovered by Bering, whose researches are comparatively little known in this country. He died of scurvy in the year 1741, after an unsuccessful attempt to discover the often-sought northern passage. The island on which he was buried has since borne his celebrated name. After Bering's death, expeditions were organised by the Russian government, which did considerable service in exploring the country. Not a little light has been thrown upon the geography of the interior by some of those who were appointed to trace the route of the ill-fated Franklin.

Sympathy with the fate of the brave man who fell a victim to his own untiring enterprise, and sympathy with those who prosecuted the search for him amid toils and dangers the severity of which we can scarcely imagine, has led many persons to read the various accounts of these expeditions, who would, in all probability, but for them, have been entirely unacquainted with the far north. These volumes have hitherto been the chief source of popular information on Alaska.

The course of the Yukon was first explored by the servants of the Russian-American Fur Company. This mighty river, which has been called the Northern Mississippi, is upwards of two thousand miles in length, while its breadth varies from one to four miles. On its banks are most of the stations whence the company's servants carried on the trade with the Indians. During the summer months it is easy to navigate compared with other rivers of the same latitude. Accidents occasioned by collision with icebergs seldom occur. Large masses of ice are formed in October, but the rapidity of the current prevents the river from being completely frozen until November. In the earlier part of the winter season, these masses are forced to the surface and are then embedded in the ice. Sledge travelling, the only mode of communication during the greater part of the year, is thus rendered tedious and dangerous. The sledges, which are drawn by dogs, are of the simplest construction. Many of them are merely long planks, turned up at one end and furnished with raw hide straps to secure the luggage. The most important stations on the river are Nulato and Fort Yukon. Both forts were, under the Russian government, garrisoned and surrounded by a picket. This was rendered necessary by the attacks of the Indians, who on more than one occasion surprised the fort, butchered all who came in their way, and carried off every valuable on which they could lay their hands. In the year 1850 the Co-Yukons, a tribe of Indians whose reputation as being the most bloodthirsty and treacherous of their race, have caused them to be feared by all the company's servants, attacked Fort Nulato, and massacred all, old and young, who were within. Among the victims was Lieutenant Burnard, whose name will long be remembered in connexion with the expedition sent out under the command of Captain Collinson, to search for Sir John Franklin.

Sitka, or New Archangel, as being the only "city," deserves some passing notice. It is built upon an island, and is rather low in situation, being upon a narrow strip of land that rises from the sea. There is a small but commodious harbour, which is guarded by a battery of guns commanding the entrance. The walls are now in a most dilapidated condition, while the firing of any of the cannon would be attended, most likely, with more disastrous effects to the gunners than to the enemy. Seen from the harbour, the green spire of the Greek church, rising in the midst of the red-painted roofs of the houses by which it is surrounded, gives Sitka a gay appearance. In the distance, ranges of lofty snow-capped mountains surround the city, their sides, as they rise from the low level of the plain below, thickly studded with trees. The capital of the country was also the centre from which the operations of the Russian-American Fur Company were carried on. The lines of low stores that occupy a considerable part of the place were often filled with the most valuable furs collected from all the stations on the Yukon. Hither the servants of the company returned from their periodical visits to the marts of the various Indian tribes, and here was the house of the governor, rising up from the tall cliff that overlooks the Alaskan capital. Unfortunately for its prosperity, Sitka enjoys the unenviable reputation of being about the most rainy place in the known world, excepting, of course, the celebrated city in the west of Ireland, where an inhabitant says it rains thirteen months out of the year. What is still worse, rain only ceases, to give place to disease. Dry weather, during the short summer, invariably brings with it rheumatism and pulmonary disorders. Since the stars and stripes of the United States first

floated over the harbour, Sitka has greatly improved in every way; in a few years perhaps, this improvement will extend to the health of the inhabitants. The settlers may find it profitable to drain the marshes which now surround the place, or, at all events to clear them of decayed vegetable matter.

Of the many Indian tribes that occupy territory adjacent to the Yukon river, the most important are the Ingelets and Co-Yukons. Speaking different dialects of the same language, they resemble each other in many of their customs and ways of life. The Ingelets are rather above the average height of Europeans, and are strong and robust. They are quick and intelligent, too: willing to be taught, and very apt pupils. Their remarkable honesty has been proved, in many severe trials, to be far beyond that of most civilised nations. Love of strong drink is the besetting sin of the race, and for the introduction of this fatal habit they may thank their communication with Europeans.

As the tribes approach nearer to the coast, they seem to retain less of their native wildness and barbarity. The Co-Yukons, who are much further inland than the Ingelets, are also much further from civilisation. Their countenances show wildness and ferocity, and their lives and habits speak the predominance of the savage. Both tribes possess a passionate fondness for music and whisky. They live in houses underground, with close subterranean entrances. In many of the contrivances of everyday life they display remarkable ingenuity. This quality is particularly shown in their mode of "walling" deer: resembling, in some manner, the Hindoo mode of catching wild elephants.

Few, except the party opponents of Mr. Seward, will now assert that Alaska is likely to prove a bad bargain to the United States. No one can doubt that the change has been a most beneficial one to the country itself. While it is a valuable territory to the United States, the probability is that it would never have been so to Russia. Frequent revolts of the Indians, incited no doubt by oppression on the part of the officials, had made the colony a very great trouble and a very small advantage to the Russian government. The persistent efforts made by some Russian merchants to carry on the trade in furs, shows that it was a trade of very considerable value. In spite of all hindrances, they persevered. The loss of life and property, from shipwreck and the predatory attacks of the Indians, did not daunt the Russian traders. They endeavoured to cope with all these disadvantages, and with the greater evils which resulted from the indolence and carelessness of their own servants. Many of these were convicts who had had the alternative of imprisonment or service, and had chosen the latter. Under no such disadvantages will the United States hold Alaska. The whalers who traded with some of the ports, exposed to the jealousy of the Russians, will now be free to push their trade as briskly as they wish; or they will be superseded by others who will make it their principal business. Communication with the various American ports, and with the ports of British Columbia, will develop her resources far beyond the most sanguine dreams of Mr. Seward's supporters. The forests will soon become very valuable, and there is reason to suppose that the mineral wealth of the country is equal to that of British Columbia. Some gold has been discovered on the Yukon, but not in sufficient quantity to entice speculators. The wealth of the country in furs—the present staple article of export—is not equal to its wealth in fisheries. The extensive cod-banks off the Aleutian islands are of the most valuable description; while salmon, the coveted delicacy of this country, is there found in such quantities, and with so little labour, that it possesses scarcely any value. In these days of quick transport, when it is found profitable to import commodities from the most distant countries, if there they can be produced or procured with the least expenditure of labour and capital—when California sends us corn, and Calcutta hay—who can doubt that the rich fisheries of these rivers will become a valuable source of supply for the British market?

Those who regard the acquisition of Alaska by the United States, as merely a step towards the possession of the whole continent, can scarcely regret the transfer. Notwithstanding the present unsettled condition of the great republic, and the antipathy to Brother Jonathan's ways that has long existed in the minds of the Canadians, few will doubt that the independent states of America must sooner or later be united under one government. The tide of empire rolls westward. Considering the vast strides in wealth, population, and education, which during the last twenty years have been made on the other side of the Atlantic, the empire of America may one day be the ruling power among the nations of the earth, when perhaps the present empires of the old world shall have shared the fate of Athens and Rome.

Mr. Whymper's Travels in Alaska and on the Yukon, a very interesting book, is the source whence most of the preceding information has been derived.

THE MILESTONES.

Seventy milestones on the road,
The road on which we travel,
Sometimes through the bog and mire,
Sometimes on the gravel.

Sometimes o'er the velvet grass,
Or through the forest alleys,
Sometimes o'er the mountain tops,
Or through the pleasant valleys.

Sometimes through the garden walks,
Light of heart and cheery,
Sometimes o'er the jagged stones
With bleeding feet and weary.

Half my milestones lie behind,
More than half I reckon,
And I can see a Thing before
That seems to nod and beckon.

Let it beckon! Let it nod!
My knees are supple-jointed;
It cannot stop me if it would
Before the day appointed.

POSTE RESTANTE.

THERE are sermons in stones; but how many in letters! It matters little what may be within them. I have a whole batch, now before me, which I do not intend ever to open; and one, I know by the postmark, is fifteen years old. There is quite enough interest for me in their envelopes and their superscriptions, in their crests and stamps, in the blots and the scratches they have picked up on their way. For a letter can, no more than a man, get through the world without some rubs, often of the hardest. Here is a dainty little pink thing of an envelope, longer than it is broad—a flimsy brick from the temple of love, shot away as rubbish long ago. It is directed in the beautifullest little Italian hand—so small that the effigy of her most gracious Majesty on the stamp might be, by comparison, the portrait of the sovereign of Brobdingnag. But, woe is me! that careless postman! The little letter, ere ever it reached me, tumbled into the mud. Dun brown splashes deface its fair outside. The mud is dry as dust now, but not dustier or drier than the memories which the envelope awakens.

Those droll dogs of friends you knew once, were addicted to sending you "comic" envelopes through the post—monstrous caricatures of yourself, or themselves, sketched in pen and ink—waggish quatrains in the corner addressed to the postman or to Mary the housemaid who took the letters in. They fondly hoped, the facetious ones, that the letter-carrier would crack his sides, that Mary would grin her broadest grin, at the sight of their funny letters. But Mary and the postman did nothing of the kind. Once in a way, perhaps, the hardworked servant of the G. P. O. who handed in the "comic" missive would observe, "He must be a rum 'un as sent *this;*" but the remark was made, more in grim disparagement than in humorous appreciation. As for Mary, she would still further turn up that nasal organ for which nature had already done a good deal in the way of elevation, and would remark, "*I* wonder people isn't above such trumperies." Mary knew and revered the sanctity of the post. Did you ever study the outsides of servants' letters? When the housemaid has a military sweetheart, he is generally in the pedestrian branch of the service, and his hand being as yet more accustomed to the plough than to the pen, he induces a smart sergeant to address his letters for him. The non-commissioned officer's stiff, up-and-down, orderly-room hand is not to be mistaken. He is very gallant to the housemaid. He always calls her "Miss" Mary Hobbs; but, on the other hand, he never omits to add a due recognition of yourself in the "At William Penn's, Esq." I have even known a sergeant ascend to the regions of "Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera," and a flourish. Mary's old father, the ex-butcher, does not waste any vain compliments upon her or upon you. "Mary Hobbs, housemaid, at Mr. Penn's." He is a courteous old gentleman, nevertheless; and if Mary shows you her letter, which she does sometimes in pardonable pride at the proficiency of her papa, who, "although he was never no schollard and going on for seventy-three, is as upright as a Maypole," you will rarely fail to discover, in the postscript, that he has sent his "duty" to you.

But, I repeat, I have had enough in my time of the insides of letters, and I intend to write no more letters, and to read as few as ever I possibly can. With the aid of a poker, a good wide fireplace and a box of matches, I got rid, recently, of a huge mass of old letters. It was the brightest of blazes, and you would have been astonished by the diminutiveness of the pile of sooty ashes which remained in the grate after that bonfire. Yet have you not seen in the little frescoed pigeon-holes of the Roman Columbaria, that a vase not much bigger than a gallipot will hold all that is mortal of one who was once senator, pro-consul, prætor—what you please? The ashes of a lifetime's letters will not more than fill a dustpan.

Dismissing the letters themselves, relegating them all to fiery death behind those bars, I linger over the envelopes; I dwell upon the postmarks, I long to be in the distant lands to which those marks refer. There is vast room for speculation in the address of a letter, for, in the mass of hand-writings you have seen, many have been forgotten. In the letter itself your curiosity is at once appeased, for you turn to the signature mechanically, and ten to one, if the letter be an old one, to read it gives you a sharp pang. Burn the letters, then; keep to the envelopes. Especially scan those which have been directed to you at hotels abroad. In very rare instances does the memory of a foreign hotel remind you of aught but pleasant things. You lived your life. The bills were heavy, but they were paid. You enjoyed.

How good the pickled herrings were at the Oude-Doelen at the Hague! What a famous four-poster they put you into, at the Old Bible in Amsterdam! Could anything be better than the table d'hôte at the Hotel d'Angleterre at Berlin—save, perhaps, that at the Hotel de Russie, close by, and that other Russie at Frankfort? That Drei Mohren, at Augsburg, was a good house, too. What a cellar! what imperial tokay! 'Tis true that the waiter at Basle swindled you in the matter of the Bremen cigars which he declared to be Havanas; but was not that little mishap amply atoned for at the Schweizer Hof, Lucerne, six hours afterwards? The Schweizer Hof! Dear me! how happy you were, idling about all day long, peering at Mount Pilate, or watching, with never-ending interest, the tiny boats on the bosom of the great blue lake! Here is an envelope directed to you at Cernobbio; another at the Villa d'Este: another at Bellaggio, on the Lake of Como. Here come Salò and Desenzano, on the Lake of Garda. Ah! a villanous hostelry the last; but with what exultation you hurried back through Brescia to the clean and comfortable Hotel Cavour at Milan! You were rather short of money, perhaps, when you arrived in the capital of Lombardy. Your stock of circular notes was growing small. No cash awaited you at the Albergo Cavour—nay, nor letters either. But there would be letters for you, it was certain, at the Poste Restante. Quick, Portiere, "un broum"—Milanese for brougham, and not very wide of the mark. You hasten to the Poste Restante. There the letters await you; there is the stack of circular notes. Yes, and here among your envelopes at home, is the banker's letter of advice, enumerating a hundred cities where he has agents who will gladly cash your notes at the current rate of exchange, deducting neither agio nor discount.

The postage and the reception of a letter in foreign countries—notably the less civilised—are events accompanied by circumstances generally curious and occasionally terrifying. I never saw a Chinese postman, but I can picture him as a kind of embodied bamboo, who presents you with your packet of correspondence with some preposterous ceremonial, or uses some outrageously hyperbolical locution to inform you that your letter is insufficiently stamped. As for the Russian Empire, I can vouch, personally, for the whole postal system of that tremendous dominion being, twelve years ago, environed with a network of strange observances. The prepayment of a letter from St. Petersburg to England involved the attendance of at least three separate departments of the imperial post-office, and the administration of at least one bribe to a dingy official with a stand-up collar to his napless tail coat, and the symbolical buttons of the "Tchinn" on the band of his cap. As those who have ever made acquaintance with the stage doorkeepers of theatres in any part of the world, are aware that those functionaries are generally eating something from a basin (preferably yellow), so those who have ever been constrained to do business with a Russian government clerk of the lower grades will remember that, conspicuous by the side of the blotting pad (under which you slipped the rouble notes when you bribed him), there was always a soddened blue pocket-handkerchief, the which, rolled up into a ball, or twisted into a thong, or waved wide like a piratical flag, served him alternately as a sign of content, a gesture of refusal, or an emblem of defiance. You couldn't prepay your letter without this azure semaphore being put through the whole of its paces; unless, indeed, previous to attending the post-office, you took the precaution of requesting some mercantile friend to affix the stamp of his firm to your envelope. Then, the official pocket-handkerchief assumed, permanently, the spherical, or satisfied stage; and you had, moreover, the satisfaction of knowing that the stamp of the firm might stand you in good stead as an Eastern firman, and that, in all probability, your letter would not be opened and read as a preliminary to its being despatched to its destination.

So much for sending a letter; on which you seldom failed (purely through official oversight, of course), to be overcharged. There were two ways of receiving a letter; both equally remarkable. I used to live in a thoroughfare called the Cadetten-Linie, in the island of Wassili-Ostrow. It was about three times longer than that Upper Wigmore-street to which Sydney Smith declared that there was no end. When any English friend had sufficiently mastered the mysteries of Russian topographology as to write "Cadetten-Linie" and "Wassili-Ostrow" correctly, I got my letter. This was but seldom. It was delivered at the hotel where I resided, in a manner which reminded me vaguely, but persistently, of the spectacle of Timour the Tartar, and of the Hetman Platoff leading a pulk of Cossacks over the boundless steppes of the Ukraine. The post-

man was one of the fiercest little men, with one of the fiercest and largest cocked-hats I ever saw. His face was yellow in the bony and livid in the fleshy parts; and the huge moustache lying on his upper lip, looked like a leech bound to suck away at him for evermore for some misdeeds of the Promethean kind.

This Russian postman: don't let me forget his sword, with its rusty leather scabbard and its brazen hilt, which seemed designed, like Hudibras's, to hold bread and cheese; and not omitting, again, the half dozen little tin-pot crosses and medals attached by dirty scraps of parti-coloured ribbon to his breast; for this brave had "served," and had only failed to obtain a commission because he was not "born." This attaché of St. Sergius-le-Grand, if that highly-respectable saint can be accepted as a Muscovite equivalent for our St. Martin of Aldersgate, used to come clattering down the Cadetten-Linie on a shaggy little pony, scattering the pigeons, and confounding the vagrant curs. You know the tremendous stir at a review, when a chief, for no earthly purpose that I know of, save to display his horsemanship and to put himself and his charger out of breath, sets off, at a tearing gallop, from one extremity of the line to the other: the cock feathers in the hats of his staff flying out behind them like foam from the driving waters. Well: the furious charge of a general on Plumstead Marshes was something like the pace of the Russian postman. If he had had many letters to deliver on his way, he would have been compelled to modify the ardour of his wild career; but it always seemed to me that nineteen-twentieths of the Cadetten-Linie were taken up by dead walls, painted a glaring yellow, and that the remaining twentieth was occupied by the house where I resided. It was a very impressive spectacle to see him bring up the little pony short before the gate of the hotel, dismount, look proudly around, caress the ever-sucking leech on his lip—as for twisting the ends of it, the vampire would never have permitted such a liberty—and beckon to some passing Ivan Ivanovitch, with a ragged beard and caftan, to hold his steed, or in default of any prowling Ivan being in the way, attach his pony's bridle to the palisades. It was a grand sound to hear him thundering—he was a little man, but he *did* thunder—up the stone stairs, the brass tip of his sword-scabbard bumping against his spurs, and his spurs clanking against the stones, and the gloves hanging from a steel ring in his belt, playing rub-a-dub-dub on the leather pouch which held his letters for delivery—*my* letters, my newspapers, when they hadn't been confiscated—with all the interesting paragraphs neatly daubed out with black paint by the censor. And when this martial postman handed you a letter, you treated him to liquor, and gave him copecks. All this kind of thing is altered, I suppose, by this time in Russia. I have seen the lowest order of police functionary—and the martial postman was first cousin to a polizei—seize Ivan Ivanovitch, if he offended him, by his ragged head, and beat him with his sword-belt about the mouth until he made it bleed. Whereas, in these degenerate days, I am told, a Russian gentleman who wears epaulettes, or a sword, is not allowed so much as to pull a droschky-driver's ears, or kick him in the small of the back, if he turn to the left instead of the right. Decidedly, the times are as much out of joint as a broken marionette.

I have no doubt, either, that the transaction of prepaying a letter has been very much simplified since the period in which I visited Russia. The Poste Restante also, has, of course, been sweepingly reformed. Brooms were not used in Russia in my time, save for the purpose of thrashing Ivan Ivanovitch. The St. Petersburg Poste Restante in 1856 was one of the oddest institutions imaginable. It was a prudent course to take your landlord, or some Russian friend, with you, to vouch for your respectability. In any case, you were bound to produce your passport, or rather, your "permission to sojourn," which had been granted to you—on your paying for it—when the police at Count Orloff's had sequestrated your Foreign Office passport. When divers functionaries—all of the type of him with the blotting-pad and the blue pockethandkerchief—were quite satisfied that you were not a forger of rouble notes, or an incendiary, or an agent for the sale of M. Herzen's Kolokol, their suspicions gave way to the most unbounded confidence. You were ushered into a large room; a sack of letters from every quarter of the globe was bundled out upon the table; and you were politely invited to try if you could make out anything that looked as though it belonged to you. I am afraid that, as a rule, I did *not* obtain the property to which I was entitled, and somebody else had helped himself to that which belonged to me. I wonder who got my letters, and read them, or are they still mouldering in the Petropolitan Poste Restante?

Poste Restante! Poste Restante! I scan envelope after envelope. I know the Poste Restante in New York, with its struggling striving crowd of German and Irish emigrants craving for news from the dear ones at home. In connexion with this department of the American postal service, I may mention that in the great Atlantic cities they have an admirable practice of issuing periodically, alphabetical lists of persons for whom letters have arrived by the European mails "to be left till called for," or whose addresses cannot be discovered. The latter cases are very numerous; letters addressed, "Franz Hermann, New York," or "My Cousin Biddy in Amerikey," not being uncommon.

I roam from pillar to post, always "Restante," and ten years slip away, and I come upon an envelope inscribed, "Poste Restante, Madrid." There is another name for this traveller's convenience in Spanish, but I have forgotten it. Otherwise "Poste Restante" belongs to the universal language. Everybody knows what it means. The Madrileña Poste Restante is like most other things of Spain: a marvel and a mystery. You reach the post-office itself, by a dirty little street called, if I remember aright, the Calle de las Carretas, one of the thoroughfares branching from that Castilian Seven Dials the Puerta del Sol. Stop! I really must apologise for mentioning the name of the Puerta del Sol. I am mournfully aware that for the last nine weeks there has been going about town, in newspapers, in club rooms, at dinner tables, a ghastly and maleficent Bore. This is the Puerta del Sol Bore. Wither him! When he spares you the Puerta del Sol auger, he gives you a taste of the gimlet of the Calle de Alcalà, or drives you mad with the ratchet-drill of the Plaza Mayor. Scorch him! With his long-winded stories of what he said years ago, to Zumalacarregui and what Mendizabal said to him. Choke him! With his interminable discourses about the "puchero," and the "tertullia," and the "Cocridas de novillos."

I don't want to be a bore, but it is not my fault if the chief post-office in Madrid be close to the Puerta del Sol. We must bow down before incontrovertible facts. The entrance to the office is in a dingy little alley lined with those agreeable blackened stone walls, relieved by dungeon-like barred windows, common in the cities of northern Spain. Opposite the post-office door, cower a few little bookstalls, where, too, you may buy cheap stationery; and there, too, in a little hutch, in aspect between a sentry-box and a cobbler's-stall, used to sit a public scribe, who, for the consideration of a few reals, would indite petitions for such suppliants as deemed that their prayers would be more readily listened to by authority if they were couched in words of four syllables and written in fat round characters with flourishes or "parafos" to all the terminals. The scribe also would write love-letters for love-lorn swains of either sex, whose education had been neglected.

I don't think I ever knew such a black, dirty, and decayed staircase as that of the Madrid post-office—save, perhaps, that of the Monte de Piété, Paris. You ascended, so it seemed, several flights, meeting on the way male and female phantoms shrouded in cloaks or in mantillas. The mingled odour of tobacco smoke, of garlic, and of Spain—for Spain has its peculiar though indescribable odour—was wonderful. The odds were rather against you, when you visited the Poste Restante, that the occasion might be a feast or a fast day of moment. In either case the office opened very late, and closed very early; and the hour selected for your own application was usually the wrong one. If the postal machine were in gear, you pushed aside a green baize door and entered a long low apartment, with a vaulted roof of stone. Stuck against the whitewashed walls, were huge placards covered with names, more or less illegible. Knots of soldiers in undress stood calmly contemplating those lists. I don't think a tithe of the starers expected any letters; it was only another way of passing the time. A group of shovel-hatted priests would be gravely scanning another list; a party of black-hooded women would be gossiping before a third; and everybody would be smoking.

You wandered into another vaulted room, and there you found your own series of lists—those of the "estrangeros." In the way of reading those lists, madness lay. The schedules belonging to several months, hung side by side. There were names repeated thrice over, names written in differently coloured inks, names crossed out, names blotted, names altered, names jobbed at with a penknife so as to be indecipherable, by some contemplative spirit in a sportive mood. The arrangment of names was alphabetical, but arbitrary. Sometimes the alphabet began at A and sometimes at T. The system of indexing was equally mysterious. I will suppose your name to be Septimus Terminus Optimus Penn. To this patronymic and

prefixes your correspondent in England has foolishly added the complimentary Esquire. Under those circumstances the best thing you could do was to look for yourself under the head of "Esquire." Failing in unearthing yourself, then you might try Optimus and Terminus, and so up to Penn. When you found yourself a number was affixed to you. At one extremity of the apartment was a grating, and behind that grating sat an old gentleman in a striped dressing-gown and a black velvet skull cap. If you can imagine a very tame and sleepy tiger at the Zoological Gardens, smoking a cigarito, and with bundles of letters and newspapers, in lieu of shin bones of beef, to eat, you may realise the idea of that old gentleman in his cage at the Poste Restante behind the Puerta del Sol. You spake him kindly, and called him "Caballero." He bowed profoundly and returned your compliment. Then you told him your number, and handed your passport through the bars. He looked at the number and he looked at the passport. Then he kindled another cigarito; then, in a preoccupied manner he began the perusal of a leading article in the Epoca of that morning. Then after a season, remembering you, he arose, offered you a thousand apologies, and went away out of the cage altogether, retiring into some back den—whether to look for your letters, or to drink his chocolate, or to offer his orisons to San Jago de Compostella, is uncertain. By this time there were generally two or three free and independent Britons clamouring at the bars; the Briton who threatened to write to the Times; the Briton who declared that he should place the whole matter in the hands of the British ambassador; and the persistent Briton who simply clung to the grate, or battered at the doortrap with an umbrella, crying, "Hi! Mossoo! Donnez-moi mon letter. Larrup, Milk-street, Cheapside, à Londres. Donnez-moi. Look alive, will you!" At last the old gentleman returned, lighted another cigarito, and began to look for your letters. For whose letters is he looking now, I wonder, and where?

Poste Restante! Poste Restante! It has rested for me close to the Roman Pantheon, and under the shadow of that blood-stained sacrificial stone by the great Cathedral of Mexico. Poste Restante! How many times have I journeyed towards it with fluttering pulse and a sinking in my throat—how many times have I come from it with my pocket full of dollars, or my eyes full of tears; tears that were sometimes of joy, and sometimes—but not often—of sorrow. The Poste Restante has been to me, these many years, a smooth and a kind post, on the whole.

CARICATURE HISTORY.

In the last century, no one had thought of issuing a weekly caricature with accompanying letterpress; yet the number of pictorial burlesques of politics and politicians, of fashions and fashionable leaders, then published, is large; and we know all the great men, and many of the little men of the age, by the pencils of political satirists, such as Hogarth at one end of the chain, and Gillray at the other. Mr. Thomas Wright has done the student of history and manners some service by collecting as many of these fugitive productions as he could lay his hands on, and giving us an account of them in a very interesting volume, which he entitles, Caricature History of the Georges; or, Annals of the House of Hanover, compiled from the Squibs, Broadsides, Window Pictures, Lampoons, and Pictorial Caricatures of the Time. This volume is illustrated with engravings copied from the old prints of bygone generations, and in looking through it we seem to live over again the lives of our ancestors, and to share with them in the passions, personalities, jealousies, intrigues, and follies of the hour. Lord Macaulay made a collection of Whitechapel ballads to illustrate some period of English history. Mr. Wright has turned to the same purpose our caricatures from the accession of George the First to the peace of 1815.

To the proverb that "there is nothing new under the sun," caricatures are no exception. They have been found in Egyptian tombs; and the illuminated manuscripts of the middle ages are sometimes adorned with extravagantly humorous pictures, in which the object evidently was to satirise particular persons or classes. Caricatures became very popular in England in the days of the Commonwealth. They used to be engraved on playing-cards, and one of them is extant at the present day. It is entitled, Shuffling, Cutting, and Dealing in a Game at Picquet. Being acted from the year 1653 to 1658. By O. P. [Oliver, Protector] and others, with great applause. Underneath the title is the motto, "Tempora mutantur, et nos——" This squib was published in 1659, the year after Oliver's death, while Richard was feebly endeavouring to carry on the Protectorate. The several persons represented—Cromwell and his son, Lambert, Fleetwood, Vane, Lenthal, Claypole, Harrison, Monk, and others, express themselves in various pithy and suggestive ways; and a Papist looks on with the remark, "If you all complain, I hope I shall win at last." Our early caricatures were mostly manufactured in Holland, and this continued to be the case even down to the time of the South Sea Bubble; but after that date a vigorous race of native satirical artists sprang up, and has continued to the present day.

A great number of caricatures arose out of the Sacheverell business in the reign of Queen Anne. The reverend doctor, who was a renegade from Whiggism, had become a vehement Tory and assertor of High Church principles, and in that capacity he preached a sermon at St. Paul's, before the Lord Mayor and Corporation, on the 5th of November, 1709, of so violent a character towards the Dissenters and their friends, the principles of the revolution, and the Whig Lord Treasurer, Godolphin, that it was determined to impeach the author. In the meanwhile, the Tories caused the sermon to be printed and extensively circulated; and when the trial of Sacheverell ended in his inhibition for three years, the condemnation of his discourse, and the burning of a copy of it by the common hangman, an immense excitement seized on the nation, and a series of riots ensued of a very alarming character. High church clergymen preached incendiary sermons; money is said to have been distributed among the mob; several encounters took place in the streets; dissenting places of worship were sacked and burnt; in short, ferocious intolerance was exhibited. The commotion was fruitful in ballads and caricatures, and not merely on the side of Sacheverell. The Whigs were not idle, and Mr. Wright gives a specimen of the kind of satirical prints they sent forth against their opponents. We here see Sacheverell in the act of writing his sermon. He is prompted on one side by the Pope, and on the other by the Devil; and the title of the engraving is "The Three False Brethren." In retaliation for this, the High Church party caricatured Bishop Hoadly, a Low Church friend of the Dissenters, in a print in which Satan is represented as closeted with the prelate, whose infirmities are coarsely ridiculed. They also parodied the Sacheverell caricature, putting a mitred bishop in the place of the Pope, and making the Devil fly away in terror from the doctor's pen. The oddest thing done at that period, however, was the issue of a medal with a head of Sacheverell on one side, and on the other a device and inscription which varied in different copies, so as to suit the predilections of both parties. The caricatures of the Sacheverell days are to be found in the collection of Mr. Hawkins. "In general," says Mr. Wright, "they are equally poor in design and execution." The figure or head of the clerical hero was introduced into all kinds of articles of ornament or use. Tobacco-stoppers, seals for letters, coat-buttons, &c., were made to take sides, and the general excitement was stimulated by every art that could possibly be pressed into the service.

On the accession of George the First, and the return of the Whigs to power after the brief ascendancy of Harley and Bolingbroke, the former of those Ministers was made the subject of a caricature which seems now not to be in existence. The object was to represent the Earl as the tool of the French King and the Pretender —an imputation which he had drawn on himself by the precipitate and disadvantageous peace he had concluded after Marlborough's brilliant victories, and by his intrigues against the House of Hanover.

The famous South Sea Bubble furnished abundant matter for literary and pictorial satirists to turn to account. The earliest English caricature on this disastrous speculation is entitled "The Bubblers bubbled; or, the Devil take the Hindmost." It contained a great many figures: a circumstance which seems to have been regarded as a recommendation, for another caricature of the same period was advertised as presenting "nigh eighty figures." This was in 1720, and in the same year a large number of "Bubble" caricatures were issued in France and Holland. In the latter country, several of these, together with satirical plays and songs on the same subject, were collected and published in a folio volume, entitled "The Great Picture of Folly." So great was the demand for such productions, and so easily were people satisfied with anything in the shape of a pictorial satire on the madness of the hour, that old engravings were re-issued with a verbal application to the various bubble companies, though the figures could hardly be twisted by the utmost ingenuity to any interpretation of current events. In England, packs of "bubble cards" were largely sold—an idea apparently derived from the caricature playing-cards of the time of the Commonwealth. In the sets belonging to the latter age, each card was embellished with an engraving representing some preposterous scheme, accompanied by four lines of verse. In many cases both pictures and verses were pointed and epigrammatic. The English caricatures of that time, however, are said to be very inferior to the Dutch.

But an Englishman of signal genius in the department of comic and tragi-comic art was on the eve of making himself famous. Hogarth's first caricature was published in 1721, and its subject was the company-forming mania of the previous year.

The general election of 1722, under the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, led to the production of many caricatures by the Tory party, who were then very much in the shade. The Tories complained, and not without reason, that the Whigs resorted to a most extensive system of bribery, and, being in opposition, they were of course severely virtuous. In Applebee's Original Weekly Journal, of January 6th, 1722—a Tory publication — the following editorial note occurs: "Altho' we think the appointing general meetings of the gentlemen of counties, for making agreements for votes for the election of a new Parliament before the old Parliament is expir'd, is a most scandalous method and an evident token of corruption, yet we find it daily practic'd, and, which is worse, publickly own'd, particularly in the county of Surrey, where the very names of the candidates are publish'd, and the votes of the freeholders openly sollicited in the publick prints. The like is now doing, or preparing to be done, for Buckinghamshire; and we are told, likewise, that it is doing for other counties also." There cannot be a doubt that Walpole

used every means in his power to secure a majority. He hardly made a secret of his determination to carry the elections by bribery and personal influence, if he could carry them in no other way; and by a liberal expenditure of money he succeeded. The Tories were very strong on the matter of this bribery. One of the caricatures of the day is entitled "The Prevailing Candidate; or, the Election carried by Bribery and the D—l." Another is called, "Britannia stript by a Villain; to which is added, the True Phiz of a late Member." The former is still in existence, and is engraved in Mr. Wright's volume. It represents the candidate—a fine gentleman in peruke and lace—slipping a bag of money into the pocket of the voter, who seems to hesitate, but is being persuaded by a devil hovering in the air above him. The wife is urged in the same direction by a parson; but two little boys express their contempt for the whole proceeding. The last of some stanzas underneath runs:

> "Say the boys, 'Ye sad rogues, here are French wooden brogues,
> To reward your vile treacherous knavery;
> For such traitors as you are the rascally crew
> That betray the whole kingdom to slavery.'"

The election which proved so advantageous to Walpole was succeeded by a calm in the political world, during which the caricaturists employed themselves for the most part on social topics. The rage for pantomime which at that time took possession of the stage—the humours and vanities of Rich, the harlequin-manager of Covent Garden Theatre; of Heidegger; of Farinelli; and of other persons connected with the amusements of the day—the eccentric performances of "Orator Henley," the scurrilous clergyman who used to preach on a tub to the butchers of Clare Market—the quarrels of Pope, and other matters of a purely personal character—these were the subjects which for a long while kept the pictorial satirists busy, to the exclusion of affairs of state. It is curious to mark the similarity of the then condition of the stage to the present. Burlesque performances, grand scenic effects, realistic contrivances, mountebanks, tumblers, rope-dancers, and wild beasts, were the chief attractions, against which tragedy and comedy had very little chance. All the town rushed to see a movable windmill, as they now flock to witness a sham steam-engine and train. The machinist elbowed the dramatic author out of the way, and in one of his early caricatures Hogarth represents a barrow-woman wheeling off, as "waste paper for shops," the plays of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Dryden, Congreve, and Otway. The date of the print is 1723.

With the death of George the First, in 1727, the opposition to Sir Robert Walpole recommenced with great vigour. Bolingbroke, who had been allowed to return to England, but not to resume his seat in the House of Lords, sought every opportunity of making the most virulent attacks on the successful Minister. He and Pulteney started the famous political journal called the Craftsman, of which the working editor was Nicholas Amhurst, who wrote under the assumed name of Caleb d'Anvers; and the Tories being thus joined by the discontented Whigs, Walpole found himself face to face with a formidable array of adversaries. He was accused of truckling to France (an imputation brought against every unpopular Minister), and of fiscal tyranny in extending the excise duties to wine and tobacco. The Gin Act—passed with a view to restraining the sale of our English spirit, the consumption of which by the lower classes had led to great disorders—was also extremely unpopular, and it proved as complete a failure as attempts to make people virtuous by statute law generally do prove. All these matters contributed to bring Sir Robert into considerable disrepute, and on the 13th of February, 1741, Sandys, one of the malcontent Whigs, made a violent attack on the Premier, concluding with a motion for an address to the King, praying him to remove Walpole from his councils "for ever." The motion was warmly supported by Pulteney, Pitt (afterwards Lord Chatham), and others; but it was lost by a very large majority. On the same day, Lord Carteret introduced a similar motion in the House of Lords, and was seconded by the Duke of Argyle; but this also was defeated. The double incident gave occasion to a Ministerial caricature, which is engraved in Mr. Wright's book. It is extremely clever, full of invention, and drawn with considerable spirit. The scene is Whitehall as it then was—the only feature of which now remaining is Inigo Jones's Banqueting Hall. A coach-and-six is being driven furiously towards the Treasury. The Earl of Chesterfield rides the off-leader as postilion, and the Duke of Argyle is on the box as coachman. Lord Carteret, who sits inside, calls from the window, "Let me get out" (the application of which, by the way, is not clear, as it does not seem that the proposer of the motion in the Lords endeavoured to escape from the business), and the coach, which has run over several people, is in the act of upsetting. Lord Cobham, as footman, holds on to the straps behind, and Lord Lyttelton—a tall, gaunt figure—rides on horseback after the carriage. In the foreground of the picture, Pulteney, drawing a set of partisans after him by their noses, wheels a barrow, laden with the Craftsman, the Champion, and other journals in the interest of the Opposition; but he sees the catastrophe, and exclaims, "Zounds! they're over!" Further on, Sandys, letting fall his Place Bill, and throwing up his hands and arms in dismay, exclaims, "I thought what would come of putting *him* on the box!"—alluding to the Duke of Argyle; while, not far from the coach, Smallbrook, Bishop of Lichfield, bows obsequiously to the great folks. Several editions of the print were published (some with variations), and the "patriots" retorted with a parody. The original was accompanied by some verses, rather humorously conceived; and Horace Walpole, writing to Conway, speaks highly of the whole, and especially commends the likenesses.

The Second Pretender's rebellion was fruitful in caricatures, of which the most famous is Hogarth's March of the Guards to Finchley, on their way to the north. The city trained bands were at this period made the subject of much disrespectful joking; indeed they had a hard time of it during the whole of the century, down to the days when Cowper had his fling at them in Johnny Gilpin. After the suppression of the formidable rising in Scotland, the caricaturists seem for a long while to have divided their attention between the politics of the hour, and the eccentricities of fashion, or other social topics: giving quite as much attention to the latter as to the former. This was the epoch of Hogarth's great productions, in which comic art was raised to the highest level. But, though Hogarth had no equal, he had contemporaries of considerable ability as fugitive caricaturists. We see much of their work in Mr. Wright's volume, and it gives us no mean idea of their readiness and skill. It is curious to observe how long the feeling of antagonism to the House of Hanover, as something foreign and degrading, lasted with a large proportion of the people. In several of these caricatures the British Lion is represented in various ignominious positions relatively to the Hanoverian White Horse. Politics, however, as in most times, frequently gave place to social matters. The rivalries of Garrick and other eminent actors; the quackery and insolence of Dr. Hill, a surgeon and journalist, who made some little name, about the middle of the century, by his scurrility and assurance; the egregious hoax of the Bottle Conjuror at the Haymarket Theatre; the earthquake of 1750, the apprehension of which threw all London into spasms of terror, but which, when it came, proved to be so gentle that, as Horace Walpole said, "you might have stroked it;" the Betty Canning Mystery; the Cock-lane Ghost; the rage for Handel and other foreign musicians; the extravagance of the rich, and the exaggerations of fashion; these were favourite subjects with the caricaturists of the time of George the Second and of the early years of George the Third. Towards the conclusion of the former reign, and for some time after, great complaints were made of the profligacy of manners, and of the evils introduced into the country by the importation of French modes and tastes. It cannot be questioned that the grievance was a serious one, and that our national morals were never more depraved, shameless, and impudently coarse, than at the period in question. Young men of fashion, having made the grand tour—often in company with tutors who were proficients in every species of debauchery—returned to England worse than they left it, and propagated at home the vices they had learnt abroad. Even though we may not accept as a true picture, in any general sense, the terrible account given by Churchill, in his poem called The Times, we must yet allow that society in the middle of the eighteenth century was deplorably corrupt. The Hell-fire Club, and other associations of a similar character, maintained a standard of villany which every young rake did his utmost to reach; the ladies were often as bad as the gentlemen; masked balls and open-air entertainments at Vauxhall and Ranelagh, contributed to the general laxity of morals; and the style of female dress reflected the spirit of the epoch. The hoops, which had been large enough in the days of George the First, became much more outrageous in the next reign; and a contemporary caricature represents a lady being let down with a crane and pulley into her sedan chair by three assistants, who carefully lower her through the open roof. The head-dresses were equally absurd. They were piled up to an enormous height by the aid of false hair, cushions, pins, pomatum, feathers, ribbons, and artificial flowers; and very singular are the pictures we here find of the fantastic forms they were made to assume. The men soon rivalled the women in eccentricity of dress. For a year or two subsequent to 1770, the Macaronis, as the young beaux for awhile delighted to call themselves, were the talk of the town, the rage of the moment, and the subjects of wits and caricaturists.

Going back a few years, we find Hogarth, towards the conclusion of his life, involved in a bitter quarrel with Wilkes and Churchill, the mortification resulting from which is thought to have hastened his death. The painter had received a pension from Lord Bute, who, on rising to power shortly after the accession of George the Third, made a great show of patronising literature and art, though doubtless with no other object than to procure support for his ministry, of which it stood greatly in need. In the fervour of his new-born political zeal, Hogarth attacked his old friend Wilkes in Number One of the prints called The Times. Wilkes retaliated in the North Briton; Churchill assisted on the same side, in his Epistle to William Hogarth; and a great many caricatures were published, representing the painter performing ignominious services for the minister, or receiving his pay. Lord Bute is frequently typified by the comic artists of the time in the form of a large jack-boot, by way of a pun upon his title. Smollett, as a paid advocate of the Scotch favourite, and himself a Scotchman, was severely ridiculed about this time; for all our Northern fellow-subjects were then regarded as Jacobites, or as a set of hungry adventurers who came to England to pick up what they could get. The unpopularity of Lord Bute has hardly ever been equalled; but it was shared by his fellow ministers, especially Henry Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, whose name lent itself very readily to the caricaturists. On the other hand, Wilkes and Pitt were the idols of the populace, until Pitt accepted a place in the Upper House, under the title of Lord Chatham, when he was looked upon as a tool of the court party, which was still ruled in secret by Bute, though that nobleman had been compelled to retire from the ministry. In a caricature published about 1770, Wilkes is pictured as a patriot worried by two dogs, one

of which has the features of Dr. Johnson, while the other is distinguished by the head of some court writer whose identity cannot now be traced. Johnson was frequently caricatured. A print issued in 1782 shows him as an owl, standing on two of his own volumes, and leering at the heads of Milton, Pope, and others, which are surrounded with starry rays. This was in allusion to the depreciatory remarks contained in his recently published Lives of the Poets. The face is powerfully drawn, and is probably a good likeness of the doctor, from the exaggerated and unsympathetic point of view.

It would be impossible, in the compass of a single essay, to follow the complicated politics of the reign of George the Third, as exemplified in the comic art of that long era; for the caricaturists were very busy during the whole of those sixty years. The love of caricature seems to have increased as the eighteenth century wore on towards its close, and a vast number of pictorial squibs were issued during the days of the second Pitt and Fox, of Burke and Sheridan, of Shelburne, North, Warren Hastings, Grattan, Horne Tooke, and the other eminent politicians of the time. The faces of all these men have been rendered familiar to us by the burlesque artists of the period, who did not spare royalty itself. Indeed, George and his consort were frequently made the subjects of ludicrous pictures, which could hardly have been flattering to their self-esteem. They were represented as "Farmer George and his wife," a very common-place couple, equally plain in looks and in costume; as misers hugging their bags of gold; as frugal, homely people, frying sprats or toasting muffins; as sordid economisers, trying to save a few pence in any shabby way; as perambulators about Windsor and Weymouth, scraping acquaintance with the peasantry, and staggering them with rapid and irrelevant questions; and in other ludicrous or ignoble relations. Of course, the celebrated story of the apple dumplings, told by Peter Pindar in a well-known poem, was illustrated by the draughtsmen of the time. A caricature on this subject, depicting his majesty "learning to make apple dumplings," was published in November, 1797. The king's passion for hunting, his coarse features and ungainly figure, his over-familiarity of manner, and his devotion to trivial pursuits, were repeatedly satirised by the artists of the latter part of the last century. It used to be said—whether justly or not—that his majesty gave so much time to agriculture that he neglected the duties of State; and he was also accused of wasting a good deal of petty ingenuity in making buttons. But the avarice of the august pair was what the caricaturists were most fond of holding up to popular aversion and ridicule. "A very clever caricature was published by Gillray, entitled 'Anti-saccharites,' in which the king and queen are teaching their daughters to take their tea without sugar, as 'a noble example of economy.' The princesses have a look of great discontent, but their royal mother exhorts them to persevere: 'Above all, remember how much expense it will save your poor papa.' The king, delighted with the experiment, exclaims, 'O delicious! delicious!'" Another caricature by the same artist, published in the same year (1792), after the arrival of news of the defeat of Tippoo Saib, shows us Dundas, as the minister who took charge of Indian affairs, communicating the intelligence to the monarch and his consort. The secretary of state announces that "Seringapatam is taken—Tippoo is wounded—and millions of pagodas secured." George, who is dressed in the costume of a huntsman, exclaims, "Tally ho! ho! ho! ho!" while Charlotte sighs forth, "O the dear, sweet pagodas!" Gillray, it appears, had a personal cause for disliking the king, the latter having once spoken of the artist's sketches with contempt. Yet in December, 1790, Gillray had published a very loyal caricature, representing Dr. Price, the Unitarian clergyman, as a disseminator of treason, anarchy, and atheism, and Burke as the illustrious upholder of the crown and religion. Exactly a year later, we find him satirising William Pitt as a toadstool springing out of the royal crown, which is described as "a dunghill." Price could hardly have been more revolutionary than that.

The most eminent caricaturists of the later years of the eighteenth and earlier years of the nineteenth centuries were Gillray, Rowlandson, and Sayer. Gillray may be said to have refashioned and reanimated the art. His best works are marked by real genius—by great inventiveness, lively characterisation, considerable humour, and no mean executive skill. His later works are not so good as his earlier; some of them, indeed, he only engraved, without designing. Rowlandson was coarser, but not devoid of talent; and Sayer, though less known at the present day than either of the others, was ingenious and prolific. The comic art of the reign of the third George was more varied and elaborate than that of the two preceding reigns; but it was also more vulgar in spirit and design. The astounding ugliness of costume which set in about 1780, and continued in several forms for many years, was equalled by the heavy, debauched, bloated, and mean faces of the people; and both these facts were made the most of by the caricaturists.

The profligacy and spendthrift habits of the Prince of Wales were severely lashed in many of the caricatures of that period; but in a little while personal matters gave place to the more important considerations arising out of the revolutionary condition of France, the spread of agitation in our own country, and the great war which speedily burst out between ourselves and the newly established republic. The anti-revolutionary and anti-Gallican feeling of the upper and middle classes of England is sufficiently proved by the caricatures reproduced or described by Mr. Wright, which are almost all on the national and conservative side. The French are held up to ridicule in every conceivable way, and John Bull is made to think the most of himself. The brilliant achievements of our army and navy were comme-

morated in many forms. Although there is a little occasional satire at the expense of the volunteers, and an outbreak of grumbling now and then at the taxes, the sentiment, on the whole, is strongly on the side of loyalty. Buonaparte is depicted as a braggart, coward, and imbecile little manikin. The amount of national self-esteem which was thus encouraged, looks half-ludicrous, half-pitiable, at this distance of time. A debased and clap-trap spirit came over the comic art of the period, and it is impossible to glance back at it with any sentiment of satisfaction. In one of Gillray's sketches, George the Third appears as the King of Brobdingnag, holding in his hand the diminutive figure of Buonaparte, whom he is scanning through an opera-glass, and addressing in these words, slightly altered from Swift's text: "My little friend Grildrig, you have made a most admirable panegyric upon yourself and country; but, from what I can gather from your own relation, and the answers I have with much pains wring'd (sic) and extorted from you, I cannot but conclude you to be one of the most pernicious little odious reptiles that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." The likeness of George in this print is very good; but the portrait of Napoleon presents quite the reverse of his real appearance. He is drawn with the lantern jaws and approximating nose and chin of a very old man—though he was then young—and his hair is carroty red! The personal appearance of the great general could not then have been much known in England; but some of the later sketches are better. It is remarkable, by the way, that the popular ideal of John Bull, continued, even to the early years of the present century, very different from that which is now accepted, as if it had come down to us from time immemorial. The costume, wig included, is that of the eighteenth century; shoes and buckles occupy the place of the now familiar top-boots; and the type of face is rather German or Dutch, than English. The modern John Bull must have come up after the peace of 1815.

Mr. Wright's volume concludes with the death of George the Third, in January, 1820, and its final pages are occupied with some of the fashionable oddities, in the way of male and female dress, of the concluding years of that long reign. The dandies and dandizettes of 1819-20 must have been a strange race. "Dandizette" was a term applied to the feminine devotees to dress, and their absurdities were fully equal to those of the dandies. We are now, however, touching upon our own day. The rising race of caricaturists were men whose works and lives bring us down to the present moment; for the most remarkable of them is still alive. George Cruikshank connects the age of Gillray, Rowlandson, and Sayer, with that of the elder Doyle, Leech, the younger Doyle, and Tenniel. The Georgian and the Victorian eras are linked together by the genius of this admirable humourist, who was a pictorial reformer in the evil days of the Regency, and who still survives to employ his pencil on social topics in the better times which have ensued.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XIII.

TUESDAY.—At the same time looking over what I have written, I should not perhaps, in strict justice, whelm all in *indiscriminate* censure—I mean the subordinates downwards—since seeing this croupier in the church, and who *was* saying his prayers. He *may* have come to think it a mere mechanical function—a simple clerkship in a bank; and certainly association and habit blunt the soul. But are there not clergy here, good men, as I know, to tell him, that all who touch pitch must be defiled, to thunder in his ears that evil got moneys must *not* be handled on any pretext, to ring out the awful words of Scripture against gamesters and others—to tell him he must give up all rather than be connected with such sin? I felt an interest in the man and would almost be tempted myself——but this is mere folly and quixotism, and I am so carried away by pity for the victims, that I begin to talk nonsense and impossibilities. What could poor I do? I must say, I admire Grainger for his self-denial, I never see him in the rooms. Sometimes, indeed, he comes, drawn in by the irresistible temptation; but when he sees my warning finger his head droops, and he slips away quietly.

Such an adventure this evening. Surely this *is* the place for disciplining the mind. I had strolled into the rooms about ten o'clock, the most delightful hour of the night, to have what I call "my quiet game at humanity." I had my card—the menials are beginning to know me and ply me with large corking pins, of which I have a supply for my pet—when I saw D'Eyncourt's face opposite. He was with a lady—a young girl, French or English, decent or otherwise, for no one can tell *here*. I have done some charming country English girls cruel injustice by mistaking them for what they were not; and en revanche, I have done other creatures too much honour by taking them for what *they* were certainly not. But everything seems inverted here. I see a scrubby, dowdy, schoolmaster-looking man, with a shambling walk, and wonder what business *he* has dining in the grand Kursaal, when he is revealed as Lord ——, who has the palace at the corner

of —— Street, London, and one hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year to keep it up. I see a distingué gentlemanly man, with the true air of high breeding about his hands, &c., and he proves to be an impostor who was turned out of the Arlington for cheating at whist. With all I have learnt, and all I have seen, I own myself at times quite at fault. The women are shabby, second-hand things; creatures of whom we heard such strange stories ten years ago, reappear here with stories stranger still. There is Captain Darling, whom every one knew as the possessor of a good estate in Scotland, a "club man," a "racing man," and for a time member of parliament and director of companies. He is now reduced to these places, and makes a few florins "out of the tables." Over on that sofa I see what has amused me and many more, going on. That little piquant widow, Mrs. Dyaper, rosy and dark eyed, and about whom "there were such stories," two years ago. She has come out as the domestic, almost bereaved, lady, doing worsted knitting on a chair in a corner, but not alone; for to the delight of friends and lookers-on, she has entangled a grave, even mouldy, doctor of fifty, in large practice in London, one of those elderly dry "professional" men, who are about as fitted for going into love as for going on the stage. This is really a dismal business to watch, especially the stages in beautifying himself—one day a pair of canary kid gloves, brighter linen, and brighter boots. It will all end in wreck. It is likely he has sisters at home to whom he will return, altered, savage, perhaps, and bent in carrying out his scheme.

And yet as I looked on at this infatuation and its victim, one thing occurred to me, that the gambler's dulness and want of instinct was on a par with their infatuation. They seemed to go to work in the wildest and most spasmodic manner. A few minutes' superficial study of the game, showed me at once that it must be subject to certain rude laws, not of course to be brought under control, or calculation, but certainly valuable as a sort of rough guide.

Again I go in, for a short study. It is curious to see how often zero begins to come up. The ordinary doctrine of chances would be that the colours should come up alternately, and I do observe that they virtually observe that law, that is, come up in short batches. Of course, I could see there were what were called runs, which set in suddenly and defied all management or calculation; but this was abnormal and unnatural, and must be passed by. Again for half an hour I tested this little system, putting down, in *imagination*, on the colour I had worked out, and it almost invariably came up, and I won, in *imagination* luckily. Here was I, a mere novice, hitting on something like the secret of this devil's mystery, and yet so dull and blinded were the victims that not one of them could see his way to success, and by some fiendish provision seemed tempted to lay his money on precisely what was certain to lose. What a scene, what a life! Is there anything anywhere among the drunkards, spendthrifts, what not, like this cold, desperate, leisurely progress down the steep hill of ruin? It is a pass, along which only one can walk, and down which the victim is driven slowly backward until he gets to the edge, when he *must* go over. The croupiers are a study in themselves. There are such varied patterns, young and old, *some* middle-aged, one or two very handsome, most of them stout, and full about the neck. All, however, have that wary, questing, roving eye (and some of them very fine ones) that looks out of the corners sharply. Some are far more prompt and skilful than the others; one or two are absolutely stupid, make mistakes in counting, &c., and on a crowded board, are tedious in paying off claims; others send out the money clumsily and in a rude indistinct way, the pieces getting confused with others; some are prompt and unerring, sending forth the shower with the nicest aim, taking exactly the right aim, and pouring them out with precision; one is a dismal ascetic looking fellow who sings his "faites le jeu," in the most lugubrious key, as if it was "Voi ch' intrate," &c., or "Come and be killed, gentlemen!" Another has a venomous twinkle in his eye, and sends the ball spinning with quite a savage rapidity, as who should say, "Make an end of this." He proclaims the result with enjoyment and rakes in the money sharply, and with a lurch. Even in the tones in which they proclaim the result, I notice different favorite keys. Twenty-one seeming to be announced slowly and sadly, "Vaint-ay-orne;" on the contrary, "eight" comes out, short and sharp like the snapping cap: "Whit!" "Oonze" is a gloomy song; "Trente-cinq," and "Vin-cat" cheerful and hilarious. One man likes to check the state of the board as he sweeps in, and says to himself, "one florin on manque,"

two louis "rendus," and such soliloquising; but I notice this is not of rigour. At night there is yet greater excitement, and a kind of pleasant enjoyment abroad. The bank seems to be losing, and every one to be winning. The room is brilliant and every one seemed in good humour. There is a vast rush to the tables, so that it was with difficulty I could carry out my little calculations, now become the regular amusement of the night. It was amazing, I say again—the fashion in which my theory was supported. I declare solemnly that I must have won fifty pounds during the half-hour I was watching. An easy way to make a livelihood, indeed.

I have spoken of a charming family I met at the table d'hôte, and who seemed to take a deep interest in what they believed was my history. Two more innocent and engaging girls it would be impossible to conceive, so naïve, so good-natured, so engaging. Their remarks were delightful, and their father seemed to dote on them. They were well brought up, good and pious, yet very gay, and with some esprit. They knew my pet perfectly from what I had said, and are just the girls she would love. I had not met them for two or three days, when, to my surprise, I saw them entering the gambling-rooms, with that air of delighted mystery which always attends the first visit. I say I was surprised, for they had always spoken with a sort of dread of the place; and their father had said: "No, my dear girls, draw on papa for any money you like, but don't let us get it in that way." Behind them, however, was a face which explained it all—that of D'Eyncourt. I saw it bent down between the two gentle faces, pouring in some whispered platitude—this sham pasha, and he promises to be soon as bloated as that despot of Egypt. It gave me a sort of chill to see this evil influence commenced. The sow-like eyes blinked at me with a sort of suspicion and dislike. He did not relish my acquaintance with these charming girls. No man, indeed, I have remarked, does relish the introduction of another man upon *his* little stage, or to his actresses.

"Papa," said one, who I think is Constance, "has given us a Frederick to play with, and we wish so much to win. Mr. D'Eyncourt says he will play for us."

"But if you lose," I said, "you will be disappointed and put out. If I was you I would go to those little booths at the Brunnen, and buy some of the agates or onyxes, and then you will have a little souvenir of the place."

He spoke. "What a goody, goody arrangement! Dear me! This is dropping the word. Now what shall we go on first? The roulettes. Let us try the colour. There, monsieur, s'il vous plait. The way those stupid idlers block up the place is unpardonable. There are two double florins down, and my own louis beside it."

Such is the malaria, as I may call it, of this dreadful game, that over those gentle faces suddenly spread a sort of anxiety and trouble, with a *questioning eagerness*, which I believe firmly was only instinctive, but which made me quite shudder. Without reflection almost I said:

"Don't, I conjure you! Take it up again. You will be sorry if you don't. You won't even win—though that is the next misfortune to losing."

They looked irresolute, but click! the silence and the proclamation followed. Again the gentle, almost rustic, faces were turned with a painful wistfulness. Their hearts, I know, were fluttering. But the verdict, a prolonged "Dooze! Rouge-pairymank!" They knew their fate from his impatient look. The mortification and disappointment could not be described.

"Never mind," he said, feeling in his pockets, "we shall beat them yet. I shall put down for you now on the same thing."

"You will only lose," I said; "if you do play, play with some method."

"I know how to play pretty well," he said, angrily. "'Pon my word, it is only these croakings that are bringing us ill luck. I wish to Heaven you would leave the young ladies alone!"

"O no," said Constance, warmly; "we didn't mean—— Here, if Mr. Austen will only put down for me—and Kate, you will follow Mr. D'Eyncourt's advice."

I looked at her irresolutely. "I must tell you," I said, "I don't play, and have determined not to play."

"And yet you come here and affect to study the system, and tell people to put on that and on that. That *is* consistent!"

I did not answer him; but said quietly to her: "If you must do it, then wait a little. Let two or three go by, for it begins to look like a run."

Down came the double click and the stillness. Manque again.

"Confound it!" said D'Eyncourt, again plunging at his pocket, the first intuitive motion with every loser. "It *is* all this

croaking," he said, impatiently. "'Pon my word, I don't understand. Come away with me to the other table."

"Indeed I will not," said Constance. "You can do so if you like, and Kate also; but we shall go on winning together."

The next time she lost. "Go on winning" repeated she.

"Don't be alarmed," I said; "we shall just lie by a little until it goes into shape again."

So we did, and the next time we did win. It was certainly wonderful. At the end of twenty minutes she had fifteen double florins in her small hand—those fine handsome pieces, which it is a satisfaction to feel. Mr. D'Eyncourt "was out" a good many napoleons, and the other girl's disconsolate face showed how mortified and disappointed she was. They are to go away home in a few days later, and I am never likely to meet them again; but I have no doubt the first shades of jealousy and coldness that have ever darkened their young lives have been caused by this fatal night. As for Mr. D'Eyncourt, he cannot be a gentleman, and if he gives me any more of his remarks I shall speak quite plainly to him.

Midnight.—What *have* I done! There, I have entered my room, and there on the table have I—O humiliation that I should write it!—poured down twenty of those heavy silver pieces! I am bewildered—they seem to dazzle me. Again what have I done? Where are my resolutions? O shame! shame! All my boastings, my pride, my contempt for this wickedness; and then to have given way like the rest: after the prayer that I had said so devoutly! I tremble as I look at those pieces, and feel a sort of flutter at my heart—I ought to detest, and yet they seem to invite. O what weak, miserable, helpless creatures the best of us are! How we swagger and boast, and how little there is in us! They seem—if it be not profane to say so—like the thirty pieces—

I have been walking up and down, scarcely able to compose myself to go to bed. There they lie—so heavy, so solid, so musical in their tone. "Zwei Gulden" and a great head on the obverse; one a "Ludwig," another a "Herzog v. Nassau." And yet, after all, it was no such great fall; for I saw round me the gentle, the good, the innocent, the smiling; and as for the mere putting down a florin, there is no absolute *crime*. Where I was culpable was in the *weakness*, the abandonment of what I had proposed so solemnly. And it has not *turned out* ill, so there is no harm done.

When I look back and analyse my state of mind, then, I can extenuate a good deal. The crowd round me, their eagerness, their success in winning, the enjoyment, the excitement, the absence of care, the enjoying faces looking into their hands, the close of a pleasant day, the general air of festivity—all this seemed to draw me in, to absorb me, to impart a sudden thrill. All seemed to say, "Come and join us, be one of us; you are losing the chance of money."

For a time I forget everything, resolutions and all; and if I had *only gone on*——

. . . . Now, on the other hand, there is such a thing as making too serious an affair of what has not sufficient importance. As I say, there has been no harm done. This money I shall just seal up, and send in to Mr. B., the clergyman, for the new English chapel—or for the poor, I am not certain which. I ought in all propriety to contribute to the church, and must have done so in any case: so query, would not this be a legitimate advantage to take? It would set free other money. On the whole, I rather lean to the cause of the poor. They shall profit. After all, there are people who would laugh if I accused myself of such a crime; and even my pet at home would smile, and say, "O, I should have so liked that little money!" No, no. Indeed, I do her wrong. Indeed, she would not. And therefore I *think* I shall not let her see these leaves. Or I shall cross out much of it. Now to go to bed more composed than I was.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER XI. THE LOUT.

MR. CRESWELL'S only son, who was named after Mr. Creswell's only brother, by no means resembled his prototype either in appearance, manners, or disposition. For whereas Tom Creswell the elder had been a long, lean, washed-out looking person, with long wiry black hair, sallow complexion, hollow cheeks, and a faint dawn of a moustache (in his youth he had turned down his collars and modelled himself generally on Lord Byron, and throughout his life he was declared by his wife to be most aristocratic and romantic looking), Tom Creswell the younger had a small, round, bullet head, with closely cropped sandy hair, eyes deeply sunken and but little visible, snub nose, wide mouth, and dimpled chin. Tom Creswell the elder rose at noon, and lay upon the sofa all day, composing verses, reading novels, or playing the flute. Tom Creswell the younger was up at five every morning, round through the stables, saw the horses properly fed, peered into every corn-bin ("Darng, now whey do thot? Darnged if un doesn't count carn grains, I think," was the groom's muttered exclamation on this proceeding), ran his hand over the animals, and declared that they "didn't carry as much flesh as they might," with a look at the helpers, which obviously meant that they starved the cattle and sold the oats. Then Tom the younger would go to the garden, where his greatest delight lay in counting the peaches, and nectarines, and plums, and apricots, nestling coyly against the old red south wall; in taking stock of the cucumbers and melons, under their frames; and in ticking off the number of the bunches of grapes slowly ripening in the sickly heat of the vinery, while the Scotch head gardener, a man whose natural hot-headedness was barely kept within bounds by the strictness of his religious opinions, would stand by looking on, outwardly placid, but inwardly burning to deliver himself of his sentiments in the Gaelic language. Tom Creswell the elder was always languid and ailing; as a boy he had worn a comforter, and a hareskin on his chest; had taken cough-lozenges and jujubes; had been laughed at and called "Molly" and "Miss" by his school-fellows, and had sighed and simpered away his existence. Tom Creswell the younger was strong as a Shetland pony, and hard as a tennis ball, full of exuberant vitality which, not finding sufficient vent in ordinary schoolboy fun, in cricket, or hockey, or football, let itself off in cruelty, in teasing and stoning animals, in bullying smaller boys. Tom Creswell the elder was weak, selfish, idle, and conceited, but you could not help allowing it—he was a gentleman. Tom Creswell the younger—you could not possibly deny it—was a blatant cad.

Not the least doubt of it. Everybody knew it, and most people owned it. Down in the village it was common talk. Mr. Creswell was wonderfully respected in Helmingham town, though the old people minded the day when he was thought little of. Helmingham is strictly conservative, and when Mr. Creswell first settled himself at Woolgreaves, and commenced his restoration of the house, and was known to be spending large sums on the estate, and was seen to have horses and equipages, very far outshining those of Sir Thomas Churchill of the Park, who was lord of the

manor, and a county magnate of the very first order, the village folk could not understand a man of no particular birth or breeding, and whose money, it was well known, had been made in trade—which, to the Helmingham limited comprehension, meant across a counter in a shop, "just like Tom Boucher, the draper"—attaining such a position. They did not like the idea of being patronised by one whom they considered to be of their own order, and the foolish face which had been transmitted through ten generations, and the stupid head which had never had a wise idea or a kindly thought in it, received the homage which was denied to the clever man who had been the founder of his own fortune, and who was the best landlord and the kindest neighbour in the country round. But this prejudice soon wore away. The practical good sense which had gained for Mr. Creswell his position soon made itself felt among the Helmingham folk, and the "canny" ones soon grew as loud in his praise as they had been in his disparagement. Even Jack Forman, the ne'er-do-weel of the village, who was always sunning his fat form at alehouse doors, and who had but few good words for any one, save for the most recent "stander" of beer, had been heard to declare outside that Mr. Creswell was the "raight soort," a phrase which, in Jack's limited vocabulary, stood for something highly complimentary. The young ladies, too, were exceedingly popular. They were pretty, of a downright English prettiness, expressed in hair and eyes and complexion, a prettiness commending itself at once to the uneducated English rustic taste, which is apt to find classical features "peaky," and romantic expression "fal-lal." They were girls about whom there was "no nonsense" — cheerful, bright, and homely. The feelings which congealed into cold politeness under the influence of Marian Ashurst's supposed "superiority" overflowed with womanly tenderness when their possessor was watching Widow Halton through the fever, or tending little Madge Mason's crippled limb. The bright faces of "the young ladies" were known for miles through the country round, and whenever sickness or distress crossed the threshold they were speedily followed by these ministering angels. If human prayers for others' welfare avail on high, Mr. Creswell and his nieces had them in scores.

But the Helmingham folk did not pray much for young Tom; on the contrary, their aspirations towards him were, it is to be feared, of a malignant kind. The warfare which always existed between the village folk and the Grammar School boys was carried on without rancour. The farmers whose orchards were robbed, whose growing wheat was trampled down, whose ducks were dog-hunted, contented themselves with putting in an occasional appearance with a cart-whip, fully knowing, at the same time, the impossibility of catching their young and active tormentors, and with "darng-ing" the rising generation in general, and the youth then profiting by Sir Randolph Clinton's generosity in particular. The village tradesmen whose windows were broken, when they discovered who were the offenders, laid on an additional item to their parents' account; when they could not bring the crime home to any boy in particular, laid on an additional item to Mr. Ashurst's account, and thus consoled themselves. Moreover there was a general feeling that somehow, in a way that they could not and never attempted to explain, the school, since Mr. Ashurst had had it in hand, had been a credit to the place, and the canny folk, in their canniness, liked something which brought them credit and cost them nothing, and had friendly feelings to the masters and the boys. But not to young Tom Creswell. They hated him, and they said so roundly. What was youthful merriment and mischief in other boys was, they averred, "bedevilment" in young Tom. Standing at their doors on fine summer evenings, the village folk would pause in their gossip to look after him as he cantered by on his chesnut pony —an animal which Banks, the farrier, declared to be as vicious and as cross-grained as its master. Eyes were averted as he passed, and no hat was raised in salutation; but that mattered little to the rider. He noticed it, of course, as he noticed everything in his hang-dog manner, with furtive glances under his eyebrows; and he thought that when he came into his kingdom—he often speculated upon that time—he would make these dogs pay for their insolence. Jack Forman was never drunk, no given amount of beer—and it was always given in Jack's case, as he never paid for it—could make him wholly intoxicated; but when he was in that state, which he explained himself as having "an extry pint in him," Jack would stand up, holding on by the horse-trough in front of the Seven Stars, and shake his disengaged fist at young Tom riding past, and express his

wish to wring young Tom's neck. Mr. Benthall, who had succeeded Mr. Ashurst as head-master of the school, was soon on excellent terms with Mr. Creswell, and thus had an opportunity of getting an insight into young Tom's character—an opportunity which rendered him profoundly thankful that that interesting youth was no longer numbered among his scholars, and caused him much wonderment as to how Trollope, who was the curate of a neighbouring parish, who had been chosen for young Tom's private tutor, could possibly get on with his pupil. Mr. Trollope, a mild, gentlemanly, retiring young man, with a bashful manner and a weak voice, found himself utterly unable to cope with the lout, who mocked at him before his face and mimicked him behind his back, and refused to be taught or guided by him in any way. So Mr. Trollope, after speaking to the lout's father, and finding but little good resulting therefrom, contented himself with setting exercises which were never done, and marking out lessons which were never learned, and bearing a vast amount of contumely and unpleasantness for the sake of a salary which was very regularly paid.

It must not be supposed that his son's strongly marked characteristics passed unobserved by Mr. Creswell, or that they failed to cause him an immensity of pain. The man's life had been so hard and earnest, so engrossing and so laborious, that he had only allowed himself two subjects for distraction, occasionally indulged in: one, regret for his wife; the other, hope in his son. As time passed away and he grew older, the first lessened and the other grew. His Jenny had been an angel on earth, he thought, and was now an angel in heaven, and the period was nearing, rapidly nearing, when, as he himself humbly hoped, he might be permitted to join her. Then his son would take his place, with no ladder to climb, no weary heart-burning and hard slaving to go through, but with the position achieved, the ball at his foot. In Mr. Creswell's own experience he had seen a score of men, whose fathers had been inferior to him in natural talent and business capacity, and in luck, which was not the least part of the affair, holding their own with the landed gentry whose ancestry had been "county people" for ages past, and playing at squires with as much grace and tact as if cotton-twist and coal-dust were things of which they might have heard, indeed, but with which they had never been brought into contact. It had been the dream of the old man's life that his son should be one of these. The first idea of the purchase of Woolgreaves, the lavish splendour with which the place had been rehabilitated and with which it was kept up, the still persistent holding on to business and superintending, though with but rare intervals, his own affairs, all sprang from this hope. The old gentleman's tastes were simple in the extreme. He hated grandeur, disliked society, had had far more than enough of business worries. There was plenty, more than plenty, for him and his nieces to live on in affluence, but it had been the dearest wish of his heart to leave his son a man of mark, and do it he would.

Did he really think so? Not in his inmost heart. The keen eyes which had been accustomed for so long to read human nature like a book refused to be hoodwinked; the keen sense used to sift and balance human motives refused to be paltered with; the logical powers which deduced effect from cause refused to be stifled or led astray. To no human being were Tom Creswell's moral deficiencies and shortcomings more patent than to his father; it is needless to say that to none were they the subject of such bitter anguish. Mr. Creswell knew that his son was a failure, and worse than a failure. If he had been merely stupid there would have been not much to grieve over. The lad would have been a disappointment, as how many lads are disappointments to fond parents, and that was all. Hundreds, thousands of stupid young men filled their position in society with average success. Their money supported them, and they pulled through. He had hoped for something better than this for his son, but in the bitterness of his grief he allowed to himself that he would have been contented even with so much. But Mr. Creswell knew that his son was worse than stupid; that he was bad, low in his tastes and associations, sordid and servile in his heart, cunning, mean, and despicable. All the qualities which should have distinguished him—gentlemanly bearing, refined manners, cultivated tastes, generous impulses—all these he lacked: with a desire for sharp practice, hard-heartedness, rudeness towards those beneath him in the social scale, boorishness towards his equals, he was overflowing. Lout that he was, he had not even reverence for his father, had not even the decency to attempt to hide his

badness, but paraded it in the open day before the eyes of all, with a kind of sullen pride. And that was to be the end of all Mr. Creswell's plotting and planning, all his hard work and high hopes? For this he had toiled, and slaved, and speculated? Many and many a bitter hour did the old man pass shut away in the seclusion of his library, thinking over the bright hopes which he had indulged in as regarded his son's career, and the way in which they had been slighted; the bright what might have been, the dim what was. Vainly the father would endeavour to argue with himself, that the boy was as yet but a boy; that when he became a man he would put away the things which were not childish indeed, for then would there have been more hope, but bad, and in the fulness of time develop into what had been expected of him. Mr. Creswell knew to the contrary. He had watched his son for years with too deep an interest not to have perceived that as the years passed away, the light lines in the boy's character grew dim and faint, and the dark lines deepened in intensity. Year by year the boy became harder, coarser, more calculating, and more avaricious. As a child he had lent his pocket money out on usury to his schoolfellows, and now he talked to his father about investments and interest in a manner which would have pleased some parents and amused others, but which brought anything but pleasure to Mr. Creswell as he marked the keen hungry look in the boy's sunken eyes, and listened to his half-framed and abortive but always sordid plans.

Between father and son there was not the smallest bond of sympathy; that Mr. Creswell had brought himself to confess. How many score times had he looked into the boy's face hoping to see there some gleam of filial love, and had turned away bitterly disappointed! How often had he tried to engage the lad in topics of conversation which he imagined would have been congenial to him, and on which he might have suffered himself to be drawn out, but without the slightest success. The jovial miller who lived upon the Dee was not one whit less careless than Tom Creswell about the opinion which other folks entertained of him, so long as you did not interfere with any of his plans. Even the intended visit of Mrs. Ashurst and Marian to Woolgreaves elicited very little remark from him, although the girls imagined it might not be quite acceptable to him, and consulted together as to how the news should be broken to the domestic bashaw. After a great deal of cogitation and suggestion, it was decided that the best plan would be to take the tyrant at a favourable opportunity—at meal-time, for instance—and to approach the subject in a light and airy manner, as though it were of no great consequence, and was only mentioned for the sake of something to say. The plot thus conceived was duly carried out two days afterwards, on an occasion when, from the promptitude and agility with which he wielded his knife and fork, and the stertorous grunts and lip smackings which accompanied his performance, it was rightly judged that Master Tom was enjoying his luncheon with an extra relish. Mr. Creswell was absent; he seldom attended at the luncheon table, and the girls interchanged a nod of intelligence, and prepared to commence the play. They had had but little occasion or opportunity for acting, and were consequently nervous to a degree.

"Did you see much of Mrs. Ashurst in—in poor Mr. Ashurst's time, at the school, Tom?" commenced Gertrude, with a good deal of hesitation and a profound study of her plate.

"No, no, not much—quite enough!" returned Tom, without raising his head.

"Why quite enough, Tom?" came in Maud to the rescue. "She is a most delightful woman, I'm sure."

"Most charming," threw in Gertrude, a little undecidedly, but still in support.

"Ah, very likely," said Tom. "We didn't see much of her—the day boys I mean; but Peacock and the other fellows who boarded at Mr. Ashurst's declared she used to water the beer, and never sent back half the fellows' towels and sheets when they left."

"How disgraceful! how disgusting!" burst out Maud. "Mrs. Ashurst is a perfect lady, and—oh what wretches boys are!"

"Screech away! I don't mind," said the philosophic Tom. "Only what's up about this? What's the matter with old Mother Ashurst?"

"Nothing is the matter with Mrs. Ashurst, your father's friend, Tom," said Gertrude, trying a bit of dignity, and failing miserably therein, for Gertrude was a lovable, kissable, Dresden china style of beauty, without a particle of dignity in her whole composition. "Mrs. Ashurst is your father's friend, sir, at least the widow of his old friend, and your father has asked her to come and stay here on a visit, and—and we all hope you'll be polite to her." It was

seldom that Gertrude achieved such a long sentence, or delivered one with so much force. It was quite plain that Mrs. Ashurst was a favourite of hers.

"Oh," said Tom, "all right! Old Mother Ashurst's coming here on a visit is she? All right!"

"And Miss Ashurst comes with her," said Maude.

"Oh Lord!" cried Tom Creswell. "Miss Prim coming too! That'll be a clear saving of the governor's vinegar and olives all the time she's here. She's a nice creature, she is." And he screwed up his mouth with an air of excessive distaste.

"Well, at all events she's going to be your father's guest, and we must all do our best to make the visit pleasant to them," said Gertrude, who, like most people who are most proud of what they do least well, thought she was playing dignity admirably.

"Oh, I don't care!" said Tom. "If the governor likes to have them here, and you two girls are so sweet upon them all of a sudden, I say, all right. Only look here—no interference with me in any way. The sight of me mustn't make the old lady break down and burst out blubbing, or anything of that sort, and no asking me how I'm getting on with my lessons, and that kind of thing. Stow that, mind!"

"You needn't trouble yourself, I think," said Maud; "it is scarcely likely that either Mrs. or Miss Ashurst will feel very keen interest in you or your pursuits."

And out of Maud's flashing eyes, and through Maud's tightly compressed lips, the sarcasm came cutting like a knife.

But when their visitors had been but a very short time established at Woolgreaves, it became evident not merely to Mr. Creswell, but to all in the house, that Master Tom had at last met with some one who could exercise influence over him, and that that some one was Marian Ashurst. It was the treatment that did it. Tom had been alternately petted and punished, scolded and spoiled, but he had never been turned into ridicule before, and when Marian tried that treatment on him he succumbed at once. He confessed he had always thought that "he could not stand chaff," and now he knew it. Marian's badinage was, as might be supposed, of a somewhat grave and serious order. Tom's bluntness, uncouthness, avarice, and self-love were constantly betraying themselves in his conversation and conduct, and each of them offered an admirable target at which Marian fired telling shots. The girls were at first astonished and then delighted, as was Mr. Creswell, who had a faint hope that under the correction thus lightly administered his son might be brought to see how objectionable were certain of his views and proceedings. The lout himself did not like it at all. His impossibility of standing "chaff," or of answering it, rendered him for the first time a nonentity in the family circle; his voice, usually loud and strident, was hushed whenever Marian came into the room. The domestic atmosphere at Woolgreaves was far more pleasant than it had been for some time, and Mr. Creswell thought that the "sweet little girl" was not merely a "dead hand at a bargain," but that she possessed the brute-taming power, in a manner hitherto undreamed of. Decidedly she was a very exceptional person, and more highly gifted than any one would suppose.

Tom hated her heartily, and chafed inwardly because he did not see his way to revenging himself on her. He had not the wit to reply when Marian turned him into ridicule, and he dared not answer her with mere rudeness, so he remained silent and sulky, brooding over his rage, and racking his brains to try and find a crack in his enemy's armour—a vulnerable place. He found it at last, but, characteristically, took no notice at the time, waiting for his opportunity. That came. One day, after luncheon, when her mother had gone up for a quiet nap, and the girls were practising duets in the music-room, Marian set out for a long walk across the hard, dry, frost-covered fields to the village; the air was brisk and bracing, and the girl was in better spirits than usual. She thoroughly appreciated the refined comforts and the luxurious living of Woolgreaves, and the conduct of the host and his nieces towards her had been so perfectly charming, that she had almost forgotten that her enjoyment of those luxuries was but temporary, and that very shortly she would have to face the world in a worse position than she had as yet occupied, and to fight the great battle of life, too, for her mother and herself. Often in the evening, as she sat in the drawing-room buried in the soft cushions of the sofa, dreamily listening to the music which the girls were playing, lazily watching her mother cozily seated in the chimney corner, and old Mr. Creswell by her, quietly beating time to the tune; the firelight flickering over the furniture, and appointments bespeaking wealth and comfort, she would fall into a kind of half-trance, in which she would believe that the

great desire of her life had been accomplished, and that she was rich—placed far above the necessity of toil or the torture of penury. Nor was the dream ever entirely dispelled. The comfort and luxury were there, and as to the term of her enjoyment, how could that be prolonged? Her busy brain was filled with that idea this afternoon, and so deeply was she in thought, that she scarcely started at a loud crashing of branches close beside her, and only had time to draw back as Tom Creswell's chesnut mare, with Tom Creswell on her back, landed into the field beside her.

"Good heavens, Tom, how you startled me!" cried Marian; "and what's the matter with Kitty? She's covered with foam and trembling all over!"

"I've been taking it out of the blunder-headed brute, that's all, Miss Ashurst," said the lout, with a vicious dig of his spurs into the mare's sides, which caused her to snort loudly and to rear on end. "Ah, would you, you brute? She's got it in her head that she won't jump to-day, and I'm showing her she will, and she must, if I choose. Stand still, now, and get your wind, d'ye hear?" And he threw the reins on the mare's neck, and turned round in his saddle, facing Marian. "I'm glad I've met you, Miss Ashurst," he continued, with a very evil light in his sullen face, "for I've got something to say to you, and I'm just in the mood to say it now."

He looked so thoroughly vicious and despicable that Marian's first feeling of alarm changed into disgust, as she looked at him and said: "What is it, Tom—say on!"

"Oh, I intend to," said the lout, with a baleful grin. "I intend to say on, whether you like it or not. I've waited a precious long time, and I intend to speak now. Look here. You've had a fine turn at me, you have! Chaffin' me and pokin' your fun at me, and shuttin' me up whenever I spoke. You're doosid clever, you are, and so sharp, and all that; and I'm such a fool, I am, but I've found out your game for all that!"

"My game, Tom! Do you know what you're talking about, and to whom you are talking?"

"Oh, don't I! That's just it. I'm talking to Miss Marian Ashurst, and Miss Marian Ashurst's game is money-making! Lord bless you, they know all about it down in the village—the Crokers, and the Whichers, and them, they're full of stories of you when you was a little girl, and they all know you're not changed now. But look here, keep it to yourself, or take it away from our place. Don't try it on here. It's quite enough to have those two girls saddled on the family, but they are relations, and that's some excuse. We don't want any more, mark that. My father's getting old now, and he's weak, and don't see things so clearly as he did, but I do. I see why your mother's got hold of those girls, and how you're trying to make yourself useful to the governor. I heard you offering to go through the Home Farm accounts the other day!"

"I offered because your—because—oh, Tom! how dare you! You wicked, wicked boy!"

"Oh yes, I know, very likely, but I won't let any one interfere with me. You thought you were going to settle yourself on us. I don't intend it. I'm a boy, all right, but I know how to get my own way, and I means to have it. This hot-tempered brute" (pointing to the pony) "has found that out, and you'll find it out, too, before I have done with you. That's all. Get on, now."

The pony sprung into the air as he gave her a savage cut with his whip, and he rode off, leaving Marian in an agony of shame and rage.

POURING OIL UPON THE WAVES.

In a plain but effective letter—effective because plain—the stewardess of the hapless Hibernia lately gave a narrative of the fate of that ship, and of the sufferings of some, at least, of those who were on board. The tale of shipwreck need not be told here in full; it is noticed in connexion with one only among a crowd of incidents. A well-appointed ocean mail steamer left New York on a certain day about the middle of November last, proud in her majesty, and well laden with passengers, mails, and merchandise. All went well for about a week, when one of those stormy periods commenced which so calamitously marked the closing weeks of the year. Things went wrong; the machinery broke down, and the ship filled to such an extent that a precipitate retreat became absolutely necessary. On the 25th of the month the boats were lowered, and the passengers and crew embarked in them. By far the greater number of the sufferers never saw land again. The most successful of the precarious fleet, had on board the stewardess of the steamer. When the occupants of this boat reached land, this stewardess was one of those who wrote brief narratives of the shipwreck. She told how, during the boat voyage the captain *poured oil upon the waves*, to smooth

their roughness, and to lessen in some degree the splash of water into the open boat—not actually to level the rolling billows, but to allay their wild tossing and breaking into spray. Whether oil was taken on board the boat for that purpose we are not told; we only know that it was thus used, two or more times, during that eventful 25th of November.

This subject of oil upon the waves is a curious one. It is by no means of modern date, either in its knowledge or its application; and yet there is only an indistinct appreciation of it amongst us generally. We do not place it among our every-day truths.

In ages long past, the effect of oil in stilling the waves was known to many grades of seafaring men. Pliny stated that the divers in the Mediterranean and the Archipelago were wont to take in their mouths a bit of sponge dipped in oil, and that they were by this means enabled to remain longer under water than other divers who were not so provided. As the diver wants to retain all the breath he can, and as long as he can, it is difficult at first to see how the attainment of the desired object could be facilitated by this agency; but an explanation soon offers itself. The object of taking oil into the mouth was to calm those small waves on the surface of the sea, which prevent the light from being so steadily transmitted to the bottom as is necessary to enable the diver to find the small objects they search for without delay. By ejecting a little oil from the mouth, it rises to the surface, and, spreading out upon it, calms the waves sufficiently to admit a good daylight to penetrate through the water. The habit followed by many fishermen and boatmen gives probability to this explanation. Dr. Halley mentioned that he saw some of the Florida Indian divers remain under water two minutes at a time; and he proceeded to notice the effects of a thin film of oil in facilitating the divers' work. A century and a half ago the fishermen of some of the Hebrides were accustomed, when the sea was getting rough, to tie to the end of a cable a mass made chiefly of the fat of sea-fowl, and allow it to dip into the sea behind the rudder; the oil from the fat exerted a smoothing agency upon the waves. The Lisbon fishermen sometimes allay the waves on the bar across the Tagus, when they wish to cross, by means of a little oil. During the siege of Gibraltar in the last century, the British officers often observed the Spanish fishermen pour a little oil upon the sea, to enable them to see oysters at the bottom. Herring-fishers on the coast of Scotland can see from a long distance when and where a shoal is approaching; the water acquires a peculiar smoothness of appearance from the oil of the fish. Seal-catchers in the Arctic regions have often observed that, when the seals eat oily fish (which they often do), the surface of the sea above them becomes much smoother than at other parts. The ocean is often observed to have a peculiar quietness in the wake of a laden whale ship. This is due to the small quantity of oil which, somehow or other, manages to exude from the vessel, perhaps pumped up with the bilge-water from the hold. Off some coasts, where fish are speared instead of netted, a little oil is poured on the water, to enable the fishers to see their prey below.

Dr. Franklin, who had an indefatigable habit of searching out a scientific explanation for everything that could be explained by science, resolved to experiment upon this subject of oil on water. He had read and heard and seen that oil is thus used, either to make voyaging more safe and pleasant or to enable the rays of light to penetrate the water, and he wished to know the reason why. He first tried a pond upon a common. Selecting the windward side, he poured a little oil on the water. Quickly it spread further and further over to leeward, until a considerable area of the pond had a very thin film, which calmed the water in a singular way. We rather suspect that some error has crept into the original account of this experiment; for it is difficult to believe that a teaspoonful of oil would render half an acre of watery surface as smooth as a looking-glass, which is the substance of Franklin's statement. On another occasion he made a deep harbour the scene of his experiments. He anchored a boat at a certain distance from the shore, and another boat made several short trips out to windward and home again. In this second boat a man had a bottle of oil, which he poured out in a very small but continuous stream through a hole in the cork. Franklin, seated in the first boat, watched the effect of the oil, while others watched on shore. Leeward of the anchored boat, little or no change was visible; but out windward the oily track spread far and wide, preventing the waves from breaking into ripple, foam, and surf.

The poor Hibernia was not by any means the first ship, the crew of which had cause to welcome the effect of oil upon the waves. About a century ago a Dutch East Indiaman made a voyage to the East, and fared pretty well until nearing the islands of Paul and Amsterdam. A storm then arose, and the captain poured out a few ounces of olive oil into the sea, to prevent the waves from breaking against and over the ship; the plan succeeded, and the ship went on her way. One of the passengers, in a letter to the Dutch ambassador at the court of St. James's, stated that the persons to whom he afterwards narrated this incident were so incredulous, that the officers and himself signed a certificate declaratory of its truthfulness, so hard did it seem to believe the effect of a very little oil upon a very great sea. Numerous examples of a similar character are to be found scattered here and there among the records of voyages. One of the many trading ships which ply between Manilla and Singapore had a singular oil adventure a few years ago. While on the voyage she encountered a very rough and unpleasant sea. Suddenly there appeared a peculiar smoothness of the sea, although the wind was still blowing, and the ship advanced favourably for three days over a sur-

face which had evidently oil upon it. Later information brought to light the fact that a brig had started shortly before with a cargo of cocoa-nut oil; some of the casks having been stove in by accident, the wasted oil was pumped out of the hold into the sea. The ships were two hundred miles apart, and yet the oily film reached from the one to the other. About ten or a dozen years ago a screw steamer, laden with corn, started from Copenhagen, to bend round the north of Jutland into the German Ocean. Just as she was coming near a stormy headland, the sea became very bad; the steamer shipped much water, the engine fires were gradually extinguished, the engines ceased to work, and the poor ship rolled helplessly on the water. A schooner was descried some few miles distant; and it was resolved that all hands should take to the boats, and pull from the steamer to the schooner. The crew poured some oil on the waves as they went, and were thus enabled to meet a somewhat less troubled sea than would otherwise have encountered them.

It seems to be now pretty well known how and why the oil acts in this friendly way: although some parts of the phenomenon still remain obscure. If it be attempted to raise waves upon the surface of oil in a vessel by the force of the wind, it will be found very difficult to succeed. The difficulty is probably due to the mutual cohesion among the particles of oil; there may be also less attraction between air and oil than between air and water. The effect is obviously far more physical than chemical. Dr. Franklin expressed his opinion that air is gradually frustrated, by the oil, in disturbing the tranquillity of water. First the wind, blowing over the water, rubs against the surface and raises it into wrinkles; then, the wind continuing, those wrinkles become the cause of little waves, and the little waves of greater waves, and so on until strong billows are the eventual result—produced not necessarily by a *violent* wind, for a moderate wind will do it if continuous. Such is the case under ordinary circumstances; but now for the oil. As a drop of oil spreads into a large and wonderfully thin film on the surface of water, there must be some kind of repulsion at work among its particles; but be this as it may, the thin film presents no points or roughnesses against which the wind may catch, no little file-teeth or saw-teeth to produce a wrinkle. The oil moves a little with the wind, acting as a sort of slide by the aid of which the air glides over the water. With a strong wind, every large wave becomes covered with a kind of rippled armour of small waves or wrinkles; and each of these wrinkles gives a hold by which the wind may further act; but if there be a film of oil on the surface, these small wrinkles are prevented from forming, although the large waves remain. What is done is, not to prevent large waves from rolling and heaving, but to arrest their increase by new waves formed on the back of them. What occurred to the boats off the coast of Denmark shows pretty clearly how the prevention is brought about. Two boats were supplied with five gallons of oil each. While the men were tugging at the oars, the captain, in one of the boats, watched the advance of the waves, and at an opportune moment, when a sea appeared about to approach and swamp them, he caused a gill or half a pint of oil to be poured out of the can; the effect was as if the wave divided and fell off on either side of the boat. The captain economised his oil in the long boat so as to make it last well out till he reached the schooner; the mate in the lifeboat was a little too lavish, got rid of his oil too soon, and had to pull the latter part of the voyage against a very heavy sea.

Working men in some trades know a little of this oil subject, though not in connexion with waves. If a solution of sugar, or any one among a considerable number of other solutions, be boiling in an open vessel over the fire, and be in danger of boiling over, a little oil poured upon the surface will immediately make the violent bubbles subside. Still more simply, if we draw a mark with a piece of soap, round the interior of a vessel somewhere between the top of the vessel and the level of the boiling liquid, the oil in the soap forms a kind of magic ring, which prevents, or at least, retards, the rise of the ebullition above that point. Noxious and unhealthy vapours may to some extent be kept from rising by some such means.

A MODERN FRANKENSTEIN.

You have possibly heard the story of a foolish man who was so highly delighted with the performance of Punch in an itinerant show, that he immediately purchased the puppet at an exorbitant price, and took it home for his own private amusement. Likewise you have heard, or if not you have conjectured, that when the foolish man placed Punch on the table, and found him incapable of movement, he felt grievously disappointed.

But now I am going to tell you of something of which you certainly have not heard.

I am the foolish man.

My disappointment, as you have heard, or conjectured, was excessive. Without writing my autobiography, it will be sufficient if I come at once to the fact, that at the time of my absurd purchase, a varied and indiscriminate love of amusement had converted me into a sort of Sir Charles Coldstream. The notion of Punch jumping on the table for my sole entertainment, had brought with it a sense of refined selfishness that was almost overpowering. I recollect I once saw Mr. Macready's inimitable performance of Luke in the version of Massinger's City Madam, entitled Riches. Luke, a prodigal who had wasted his substance, and had afterwards, through the supposed death of his brother, become possessed of immense wealth, sat at the head of an enormous table, groaning with every sort of wine and viand, and he sat—alone. Here was a repast

for a score of guests, yet Luke feasted alone. This was his compensation for the misery he had endured during that period of his life when, already accustomed to luxury, he had been subjected to indignity and want. While everybody else feasted he had starved. Tit for tat. He now invited himself to a gorgeous banquet, from which everybody else was excluded. Luke was a very bad fellow, but there was something in his nature that harmonised with my own. I felt more glad than I ought to have been when he was regaling himself in his selfish fashion; less glad than I ought to have been when his brother returned to life, and retributive justice hurled him from his lofty eminence.

My feelings, when I brought home the puppet and laid it on the parlour table before me, must have been extremely similar to those of Luke when he first sat down to his feast. I had had my period of privation. I had not indeed suffered poverty, but I had lost the capability of being amused, which alone makes life tolerable. The people standing round the show from which Punch squeaked forth his paltry ribaldry had roared with laughter, while I was altogether unmoved. Now the tables were about to be turned. Punch should squeak for me alone; and that very fact might be sufficient to season his wretched jokes even for my dull palate.

One of my readers, looking extremely sagacious, wonders that I could be such a fool as to lay Punch on the table and expect him to get up of his own accord; and is willing to explain how the hand of the human performer, craftily inserted into the puppet, is the sole cause of its brief vitality. If, having purchased Punch, I had managed him after the approved fashion, moving his arms with two of my fingers and his head with a third, there would at least have been a method in my madness.

Exactly, I ought to have been amused by witnessing the twiddle of my own fingers. In that case a handkerchief knotted into that infantile semblance of a confessional, wherewith nurses vainly try to amuse squalling children, would have answered my purpose. The verb "amuse" rose before me in the purely passive form. I did not want to amuse myself, but to be amused—that is, by somebody or something that was not myself, and the sight of Punch in the street suggested to me that the puppet was the destined source of amusement.

So far so good; but, as the sagacious reader has perceived, I have not yet accounted for my extreme folly in believing that Punch was capable of spontaneous motion. The wish that the inanimate figure might squeak and jump about was ridiculous enough, but it was not without precedent. The German poet Heine once wished that every paving-stone might have an oyster in its shell, and that the earth might be visited by heavy showers of champagne; and a town where the window-panes are made of barley-sugar, and ready-roasted pigs, with knives and forks stuck into their bodies, run about squeaking, "Come, eat me"—such a town has for years been the coveted Utopia of many an infant epicure. But why, in my case, did the floating desire condense itself into a firm belief? Why did such a trivial wish become father to such a very audacious thought?

If the sagacious reader persists in this question he has never known what it is to be really in love. For if he has experienced the sort of love, out of which such works as Romeo and Juliet can be fashioned, he must be perfectly aware that there is a state of mind in which wish and belief are entirely commensurate with each other. Tell a lover, fired with the sort of passion, which I now have in view, that his idol is quick-tempered, greedy, vain, selfish—give her, in short, any attribute that militates against perfection, and support your assertions with any amount of evidence, and you will find that the false faultless image, which is set up in his own mind, is not to be overthrown by living witness or by lively argument. No; he worships a mental ideal, and the earthly figure which he has chosen as its corresponding actuality must exactly resemble it, in spite of every obstacle. When the idol, so strenuously bolstered up, falls down, it comes with a crash, as in the case of Othello.

Well, the desire of seeing a spontaneously jumping Punch, had with me reached the intensity of belief, and as the figure lay on the table before me, I honestly expected it to get up and execute some of its wonted feats. It was exactly eight o'clock when I commenced my experiment, and when the timepiece had struck the half-hour I was still, with fixed eyes, staring at a motionless Punch. When I heard the indication that an hour was completed, I was in despair.

For about ten minutes, as I learned by the timepiece, my mind was a perfect blank; but I was roused by a sharp ring at the bell. Impelled by I know not what instinct, I strode to the street door, and tearing it open, saw an uncouth person with unkempt hair, holding in his hand a vessel, apparently of tarnished silver, which he proffered for a moment and then withdrew. Following the motion of his arm, I snatched it from him, and closing the door with a bang, rushed back into the dining-room, an inner voice telling me that I now held an elixir of life which would animate the puppet. I sprinkled a few drops on the rigid face, and inclined my own head towards it with feverish expectation. A smart stroke on he left ear, causing me considerable pain, startled me from my contemplation. I raised myself to an erect posture, and to my infinite delight, saw Punch sitting upright, and brandishing his cudgel with more than wonted vigour. (By the way, I should have said before that I put this weapon in its proper place, with the arms of the figure folded across it, when I first laid my purchase on the table.)

Punch not only moved, and rattled his tiny legs, but his eyes seemed to flash with a vivid intelligence which I had never perceived in the show, and he appeared to meditate some decisive action. He did not meditate long, but aimed a

second blow at my head, which I fortunately avoided, the removal of a tangible object for the exercise of his vigour causing him to fall sideways on the table. The pain which he apparently felt, when his own wooden head came into collision with the board, which had only an oilcloth covering, was clearly expressed by an increased brightness in his eyes. After viewing me maliciously for a few seconds, he dealt a blow at my table-lamp, the glass leg of which he demolished, causing the top to fall with a heavy crash, and leaving me no other light than such as was afforded by the fire in the grate. A violent bound then took him to my sideboard, when with insane fury he effected the destruction of my wine glasses and cruets.

How little do we know what is good for us! Not many minutes before I had lamented the want of animation in the hideous figure I had so foolishly purchased, and now I would have given anything to see it deprived of the wild vitality I had still more foolishly thrust upon it.

The world in general is accustomed to look upon Punch as simply a ridiculous figure. On their way to the spots where they pursue the more serious occupations of life, gentlemen of education and intelligence have their attention arrested by the sound of a squeaking voice with which they have been familiar from childhood, and join a small crowd intent on witnessing the performance of a drama which causes universal laughter. They do not much understand what is passing before them, for the plot of the play has undergone considerable changes since the days when their mammas, at a considerable expense, bespoke a special performance of Punch for the amusement of the juvenile party assembled to celebrate their birthday. Possibly one of the combats at the time of their pause is between Punch and a very stiff dragon, which opens its jaws and fiercely squeezes the head of the puppet between them. They did not see such a dragon in the days of their youth; but they are not astonished at the innovation. The whole affair is too trifling to awaken anything like surprise, however adverse the performance may be to the law of precedent. The educated and intelligent spectators feel, however, that the soundless bite of an ill-shaped dragon is not sufficient to repay them for their slight sacrifice of time; an instinct tells them they ought to hear the crack of the cudgel against the wooden head. So they take care to see Punch strike one of his quasi-human adversaries, and to see the head of the adversary knocked smartly against the proscenium before they resume their journey.

The character of a man of education and intelligence may be tested by the precise moment at which he quits the semicircle of spectators ranged before Punch's show. Mere vulgarians, comprising especially those errand boys who have been enjoined not to lose a moment, are sure to stop till the performance is over, when they usually follow in the track of the retiring exhibitor, and therefore afford no criterion at all. But with the man of education and intelligence, who is sure never to see either the beginning or the end of the play, the case is altogether different. When he is liberal, he graciously waits till the cashier of the show comes with the hat, that he may pay a fair price for the enjoyment he has received. When he is stingy he takes fright at the hat, and its first appearance, even in the distance, is the signal for his departure. When he is merely careless, he retires indifferently, just as the fit takes him, without waiting for or shunning the opportunity of payment. But, however the men of education and intelligence may differ from each other, they all agree in one point. Every one of them, if on quitting the little crowd he runs against a friend who passes, leaving the show unnoticed, feels bound to apologise for having taken part in a recreation so frivolous. Some refer sentimentally to the delight afforded by reminiscences of the innocent days of children; some wisely make the novel remark that "men are but children of a larger growth;" some, more honest, confess that it is their weakness to like a laugh, however obtained, and to add that they look upon Punch as an expedient for the promotion of hilarity that has never been known to fail.

And so they walk away to keep important appointments, and to transact important business, little reflecting that they have witnessed one of the most awful tragedies ever offered to the contemplation of mankind. They have, in fact, seen represented a series of murders, all perpetrated by brutal means, that would raise the horror of civilised Europe if brought before the notice of a legal tribunal, and all accompanied by reckless derision on the part of the murderer, an uncouth being, whose form and voice seem to separate him from the rest of mankind. It is, I believe, by Charles Lamb that Punch is regarded as a compound of Richard the Third and Don Juan. But the wicked Englishman perishes on Bosworth Field, and the Spanish libertine is borne away by fiends; whereas there is no retributive justice in the tragedy of Punch. By hanging the hangman, the hook-nosed ribald shows that he is superior to human law; by killing the Evil One, who appears not as a tempter, but as a Nemesis, he shows that he is beyond the reach even of superhuman punishment. Of all the plays ever invented, there is none so thoroughly wicked as that in which the English Punch, widely differing from his Neapolitan ancestor, is the principal personage.

This is no digression. It is necessary for my readers to regard Punch from a serious point of view, and to know that I am capable of regarding him in a like manner, if they would appreciate the horror which I felt when a living, moving Punch, apparently an incarnation of the spirit of malice, was carrying on his work of destruction before my eyes, visible only by firelight. A statue, associated with nothing but cheerfulness—say, for instance, one of the insipid figures copied from some creation of Canova—when standing in a passage, where the rays of the moon, unmingled with other light, fall upon it, becomes a ghastly spectacle. In

mere rigidity, under certain aspects, there is terror, and I have no doubt that every one of Madame Tussaud's rooms, inspected by the grey light of early dawn, becomes a Chamber of Horrors. What, then, could be more awful than the deformed Punch, with a thousand murders upon his head, which, if not real, were, at any rate, as real as himself, brandishing his instrument of destruction, with grievous efficiency, and displaying hideous features, rendered more hideous still by the red glare by which they were illumined? He seemed a triumphant demon, sporting in his proper element.

Not without a sense of fear, I made several desperate clutches at the figure, hoping to arrest the work of destruction, but I only received as many severe raps on the knuckles. Some other measure must be adopted. A thought struck me. I left the room and descended into the kitchen, where I heard raps and crashes repeated in the room above. The servants had retired to rest.

Presently I returned to the parlour armed with a large dish-cover, which was generally used to retain warmth in haunches of mutton and other joints of more than ordinary dimensions. Punch was on the table where I had first placed him, and I was pleased to notice that my looking-glass was still unbroken. A languor, probably caused by over-exertion, had evidently taken possession of the destroyer, and seizing my opportunity, I clapped the cover over him, and resolutely held it by the handle. The clattering noise I heard within showed me that the activity of the captive had returned. The sound only served to increase the vigour of my pressure.

At this moment I heard the latch-key in the door of the house, and shortly afterwards the door of the room opened, and a young gentleman, who lodged in an upper apartment, and with whom I was on familiar terms, made his appearance. He cast a look of surprise at the broken lamp, but his attention was soon absorbed by myself. What in the name of wonder could induce me to stand in the midst of semi-darkness, pressing a large dish-cover on the table with all my might, he could not divine, and with sundry expletives he acknowledged his perplexity. "What was I up to?" This was his question, couched in an idiom which he had studied with much assiduity.

Now, I am not given to mendacity, neither was I guilty of any crime that I wished to conceal. I was merely doing my little utmost to prevent the destruction of my property. And yet something prevented me from telling the honest truth. Put yourself in my place, reader, and ask yourself whether there is a friend in the world to whom you would acknowledge that you were keeping a recently-animated puppet under a dish-cover? With impudence suggested by despair, I answered that I was doing nothing. My reply seemed to be more satisfactory than I had reason to expect, and indeed to suggest some meaning that I had not intended. My friend looked exceedingly knowing, winked archly, thrust his tongue into his cheek, and left the room without further question.

Relieved by his departure, I unwittingly relaxed the pressure of my hand, when the dish-cover, as if impelled by a spring, at once flew up to the ceiling, and Punch, released from captivity, was in full enjoyment of a liberty which he at once expanded into licence, bounding to a small table, which was used to sustain small fragile curiosities, and demolishing them with demoniac delight. Unable to endure any longer the wanton tyranny of the reckless puppet, I seized the poker, and fiercely struck the head. The body being of a yielding material—glazed chintz, I believe—offered no resistance, and consequently the head was merely bent beneath my blow without receiving any injury whatever. Some other mode of attack must be adopted. Flinging down the poker and snatching up the tongs, I firmly laid hold of Punch, and holding the tongs at arms' length, conveyed him to the fire.

Nothing I ever endured in my life equalled the horror I felt during the few moments that followed. The head of the puppet was pinched tight between the tongs, but the eyes rolled, as if Punch were aware of the fate in store for him, and the little legs kicked convulsively. I plunged him into a yawning gulf of fire, caused by the separation of two large coals, and then thrust him down with the poker. During this process he writhed as if in the most intense agony, and his eyes were fixed upon me with a mixed expression of rage and pain, until the small flames that arose beneath, began to consume him, and he was gradually changed into a black shapeless mass. The end of the operation was marked by a prolonged squeak, that seemed to enter my very soul. I sank back exhausted into an arm-chair.

On the following morning I was aroused by the servant's opening the shutters. Raking the ashes I discovered a lump of charred wood, which was evidently the head of the ill-starred puppet. My friend entered the room, and asked me if I was better, with more of mirth and less of anxiety than usually accompanies such questions, when addressed to an invalid. In reply to some searching inquiries, he replied, with a scarcely-suppressed smile, that on the previous night he had found me, with a very flushed countenance, violently pressing a dish-cover on the table, and evidently not very steady on my feet. The beer-boy, who called for the empty cans, reported that on the previous evening I had, somewhat to his surprise, taken in the beer myself. When I endeavoured to gather the general opinion as to the destruction of the lamp and glasses, which still lay in fragments, the servant stated her belief that the cat had been in the room.

Surely, my knowledge of my own affairs is better than of other persons. If my readers choose to favour an hypothesis, based upon the evidence of the beer-boy and the servant, and to decide that I might indeed have bought Punch, but that all the wonderful events that followed the purchase were the result of a

heated brain, I can't help it. I have told the truth to the best of my belief, and if they object to receive it the fault is theirs: not mine.

GHOSTS.

Ghosts often come to my window,
And knock at my chamber door,
Or sit by my side at dinner,
Or walk with me on the shore.
I know their villanous faces,
As they giggle, and sneer, and jar;
They will not be gone, so I'll count them,
And tell them what they are!

Ghosts of ambitions buried,
Ghosts of a love grown cold,
Ghosts of a fortune squandered,
Ghosts of a tale that's told,
Ghosts of a traitorous friendship,
And of follies nine times nine!
Come Wizard! come! and lay them
In the deep Red Sea!—of Wine!

GOOD COMPANY FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.

"King's College Hospital, Portugal-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields. The committee of this institution desire to thank the many friends who have so kindly assisted them with presents of flowers and evergreens for the Christmas decorations of their hospital, and for furnishing the Christmas Tree for the children in the Pantia Ralli ward. The tree will be lighted this evening at about four o'clock. There are no infectious cases in the ward, and visitors desirous of seeing the decorations on the tree will be admitted at any time by giving their name to the porter at the door. A large portion of the decorations have been executed by the patients themselves, and have been carried out with so much taste as to be well worth a visit. F. A. Bedwell, vice-chairman."

This was the invitation to the public which appeared in the papers on New Year's morning, and which I, as one of the public, resolved to accept.

The first thing, of course, that struck the eye on entering the Pantia Ralli ward was the large, gaily decorated tree in the centre of the long, clean, airy room; then the holly wreaths, the floral emblems, the pretty pictures, and bright illuminated texts covering the walls. The first thing that struck the heart was the quiet happiness and homelike look of the groups clustered about the beds. Each little knot made a family party of its own, and brought the home into the hospital. Mothers and fathers, perhaps with one or two elder children, perhaps with a baby to help in the general fun, had come to share in the pleasure of their little sufferers; and wherever one turned, some sweet and tender picture, touched in by the hand of living nature, seemed to bring one closer to one's fellow-creatures, for sympathy and pity.

Here was one mild, decent-looking family—the father a well-mannered mechanic, the mother a soft-eyed, pretty young woman, with a baby and a sturdy little rogue of five—come to see a very lovely little girl, brought in last night, with some acute affection of the lungs. Quite unconsciously the young mother made many a touching picture, the like of which Raffaelle saw and noted in his day, as she pressed her sick child's fevered face against her own cool cheek, and soothed its moments of weariness with her pretty motherly devices—pretty, if at times not quite wise. This family interested me much on account of the winsomeness of the woman, the exceeding sweetness of the child, and the polished manner of the father, who was a foreigner—Swiss or German, I imagine. When I asked him what ailed his child, I got what seemed to be the stereotyped answer of the place, "the bronchitis;" but I made out the underlying causes of bad air and unwholesome lodging, to which so much of our disease in towns is owing. "If I had the means," he said, "I would live in the country. We would all do more than we do, if we had the means," he added, with a pleasant smile.

Passing from them, I came upon a woman dandling in her arms a dark-eyed diminutive child, the smallest for its age I have ever seen. It was eighteen months old, and was not larger than a small monkey, or good sized doll. But it was sprightly and intelligent, though also very fretful and irritable, and with good food and nursing would probably broaden out into something more normally human than it looked at present. Here was a widow with a careworn look and shabby weeds, too sad to be playful, holding listlessly on her knee a pallid attenuated infant, more than half of whose malady was evidently due to starvation; here a young woman, rather flashily dressed, and of a good humoured coarse pattern of humanity, played with her now healthy baby, which she had brought to see the tree out of gratitude for the "kind treatment it had received from the good gentlemen and dear sisters of the ward."

Some of the brighter and more original of the children are for ever imitating all they see done by their elders, as children generally do, and one, whose chest had often been

sounded with the stethoscope, silently stole that instrument out of the physician's pocket, where she knew it lived, and tried his legs as he had tried her lungs—listening with a wise countenance to the mysterious revelations it made.

How pretty it was, if sometimes so sad, to see the various attitudes and conditions of the children! One little fellow, convalescent but still weak, was seated in a chair mounted on a table, and looked really pantomimically regal in his small scarlet wrapper; another, enveloped in a blanket, was laid across its mother's lap and arm in the attitude of Henriette Brown's "Sick Child;" some sat up in their cots, playing with the toys spread out on the bed-shelf before them; others laid down quietly in theirs, not speaking and not moving, only turning their eyes longingly to the fairy tree which was to gladden and relieve their weary sufferings.

Some of the cases were very interesting, and I may as well state them now before I go on to the tree. A child was brought in, dying from croup. When at the last gasp they cut into the windpipe, inserted a silver tube for the child to breathe through, and so saved its life. I saw the scar; which will remain; but the little one itself was fat and lively, and apparently in perfect health. This too was "the bronchitis" when I asked the mother, and the scar was "for a lump in her throat." One child, whom I saw running about like a miniature lamplighter, had been paralysed a few months ago; another had been cured of an awful outburst of scrofula; but, perhaps, the most striking of all the cases, were those of three children who had been brought in, dying of atrophy. As they were unable to be fed naturally, owing to uncontrollable sickness, the physician ordered beef-tea poultices to be wrapped round the loins and spine, which at once revived them; and then began the long labour of building up what exposure and privation had nearly destroyed. For between two and three weeks they were fed with raw meat, torn by the nurses into the finest possible filaments, and reduced to a pulp—very small quantities of which they gave continually, thus nourishing the little ones by slow degrees until they were able to be fed in a more ordinary manner.

But though science can do much, it cannot do everything; and with all the lives saved and the successful cases to the good of the account, there are others which are hopeless from the beginning. One was there this afternoon—a beautiful little creature, so far as mere features went—with a huge tumour on the top of its head, malignant it is feared, and almost as large as the head itself. As yet, the tumour has not touched the brain, and the child is quite natural and intelligent; but the sadder phase has to come, and not even the administration of the Pantia Ralli ward can do more than alleviate the suffering that must be, and gladden the poor little life, so far as it may be gladdened, for its brief remaining term.

Nothing impressed me more than the extreme kindness of the young men towards the children. They were like big elder brothers among the little ones, and very unlike the conventional medical student of comic literature. Perhaps the adoption of Sister nurses has had something to do with the improvement, for there are no paid upper nurses in the hospital, which is served by the Sisters of St. John's House. King's College Hospital was the first to adopt Sisters as the head nurses; and the result has been most satisfactory. More intelligent and more conscientious than the paid class, they manage the patients and children better, carry out the orders of the doctor more faithfully, and aid him more effectually by the accuracy of their own observations. The name of hospital nurse, once synonymous with brutality and callous ignorance, is now a guarantee for the best kind of sick tending; and who shall say where the refining influence of that reform ends? Besides, this self-devotion gives educated women a work to do that is as valuable for themselves as for those for whom it is done. It gives the lonely, duties; the unemployed, occupation; the solitary, interests and objects for love and pity. There is no sickly sentimentalism of any kind about them, no fantastic excess, no advanced ritualism, or revivalism, or any other one-sided manifestation of enthusiasm; all is done in a quiet self-controlled purposeful manner; and the work to be done, not themselves in their mode of doing it, is the main object which each has before her, and each tries to carry out to perfection.

As I entered the ward, the Sisters were decorating the tree, the young assistants helping; and one or two sturdy little fellows were made happy by being allowed to hand up the toys that were to be hung. Everything was done so deftly, so neatly, with such good management; no one got into any other's way; there was no confusion, no irritation, no contradictory orders, or opposing wills; everything was so peaceful and so happy, and the very children,

being for the most part ill or delicate, were less uproarious in their pleasure than would have been the case had all been in full health. The most uproarious of all was a self-assertive mite, who could just toddle and tumble about alone, and whose organ of acquisitiveness was decidedly large, for she wanted all she saw, and screamed lustily when she did not get it.

Now began to come in the physicians connected with the hospital, and the ladies belonging to them; and it was pretty and eloquent to see how the faces of the children lightened up as they entered, some of the bolder indeed running across the floor for a kindly word or look; and one pretty babe holding up her mouth to be kissed, as confidingly as if she had been at home. One of the ladies, the wife of one of the chief physicians, a young mother herself, seemed to be a veritable centre of happiness wherever she moved; and beautiful as she is, she never looked more lovely than when talking to these poor little ones, playing with the babies, and soothing the sick and fractious, with just as much tenderness and dear maternal sympathy as if she had been in her own nursery at home. God bless her for her good work in the "Ralli," so lovingly and faithfully performed!

The ward was now quite full. The toys were hung, the blinds drawn down, the wax tapers and coloured gelatine lamps were lighted, and the full glories of the tree were revealed. The place was all alive with sickly little creatures, with pale faces and large bright eyes, brighter and larger from illness, clustering nearer and nearer to the magic garden in the centre. For not only the children in the Ralli ward itself, but all the children in the hospital who could be taken from bed, and such of the out-patients as were brought, were admitted to the festival. Some invalid women came tottering in from the nearer wards, one looking like an Orphic ghost, with only a white pinched face seen from the folds of the blanket she had wrapped round her; a few douce, fatherly, invalid men gathered quietly at the end of the room, near the door; grown girls and boys, all pale and wan, and feeble yet, poor young things! were also admitted—all to see the tree, and all apparently as well pleased with the joy of the children as if it had been their own especial treat. And then the names of the fortunate possessors of certain lovely toys were called, and the gentle widow of the founder of the ward handed them to their owners as they came forward to receive them. All did not come or answer to their names. A certain Tommy was called for loudly, once or twice, in vain, when a voice at last shouted out, "In bed in the Albert;" which was reason enough why poor Tommy should not receive his New Year's gift to-day, from the hands of the foundress herself. But his toy, and all the other toys and treasures apportioned to the absentees were set aside, to be given when the fitting time came. After this the outsiders and the little ones had their innings, without the ultimate neglect or overlooking of a single child.

One small woman, herself little more than a baby, lugged a huge baby in her arms, to which, because a baby, and now specially fine and fat owing to the good nursing of the ward, more than one distributor had given something; but the miniature nurse had been left out, when the dear young wife and mother of whom I have spoken before—how I should like to give her name!—spied out the truth, and asked the Moloch-bearer if she herself had had anything? "No, ma'am," said the child, with a beaming face; "I have baby." "Well, then, because you are such a good little nurse you shall have this," said the lady, giving her a divine doll, with real hair, and a glorified robe of muslin and ribbon.

I would not have exchanged that child's intense happiness at that moment for the coronation day of a queen.

The physicians, being only men, got into great coils at times, and were overwhelmed with their responsibilities. I saw one going about helplessly with another divine doll, which he did not know what to do with—it was too responsible a thing to decide, unassisted, who should have it; so at last he gave it to one of the Sisters, and cleared his conscience. Another had a lovely horse and cart in tin, which he was going to bestow on a girl baby, until quietly reminded that it was fitter for a boy who could run alone and drag the cart after him. These were the frailties of man's nature, and occasions on which the superior intelligence of woman triumphed.

The children were wonderfully well behaved. The word is no exaggeration. It would have been impossible to find better manners in any West-end drawing-room. There was no snatching, no asking, no crying. When one tiny philosopher of three saw her baby sister with a silver cracker, which it was frantically desirous of stuffing into its mouth on the instant, all she said,

with a little sigh of hopeless yearning, such a glory being surely too impossible for realisation, "How I wish I had one like that!" When they upset their boxes of sugar-plums—which they all did by trying unscientific experiments with the lids and original modes of convoy, bottom uppermost—there was no outcry, only a general scramble of little puddy hands, to pick up, and gather in, the wreck. I will not answer for the strictest honour of the wreckers. I think I saw more than one transfer of sugary jetsam and flotsam from the floor to unlawful mouths; but there was no complaint, and wreckers are notoriously given to this kind of illegal transfer.

After the toys had been distributed, the tree was drawn away, the lights put out, and the magic lantern set agoing. The story of Cinderella, and the adventures of a light-minded cat; an energetic cobbler who moved his arms and twitched his thread; a jerking Blondin wheeling a barrow along his tight rope with heroic courage if with an uneasy motion, and whisking face about in the twinkling of an eye and with the snap of a tin accompaniment behind the screen—with many other beautiful and æsthetic pictures, all explained and managed by the medical assistant in charge of the ward—brought forth bursts of childish applause; but in a noticeably feebler volume of sound than if the audience had been anything but a hospital audience. This was perhaps the most touching fact of the whole day—the subdued and plaintive tone of sickness running through the joy and excitement of the little company. How glad one felt for that joy given to them in the midst of so much suffering! They were all as well cared for during the time of the magic lantern, as they had been in that of the Christmas tree; and I saw the young medical assistants hoist up such of the little people as had strayed behind backs, and seat them on their shoulders to give them a good view. This too was an incident not without value, if taken as a symbol; and with this, as eminently significant and suggestive, I will end my meagre account of the New Year's-day festivities in the Pantia Ralli ward of King's College Hospital.

One word as to the origin of that ward. It had long been a matter of regret to Dr. Priestley, as a physician connected with King's College Hospital, that they had no ward specially devoted to children. So many cases were brought to the hospital, which they were obliged to send away to die because they had no place for them, that the need of a children's ward, and the immense benefit that would result from it, became daily more pressing in his mind, and an idea which he earnestly longed to see realised. One night he was sitting with Mr. Ralli, a liberal and wealthy Greek merchant, whose name is well known to most of us; and while waiting for the moment when his attendance should be required up-stairs—for Mrs. Ralli was ill—in the course of a discussion on workhouse infirmaries, he mentioned his desire for this children's ward, and the great need there was for one at King's College Hospital; and he spoke as he felt, earnestly and warmly, but without a thought of his friend's power or possibilities. The next morning Mr. Ralli sent him a cheque for five thousand pounds, desiring him to found therewith the ward he desired, to be called the Pantia Ralli ward in memory of, and as a memorial to, his father whom he had much loved, and, in part, as a thank-offering for the safe passage of his wife through a time of danger. The money was to be invested in such securities as he approved of, and Dr. Priestley was to be one of the trustees; there were to be twelve beds in the ward, and he reserved to himself the right of sending children there when he liked. Finding on calculation that there was not enough for the twelve beds proposed, Mr. Ralli added another thousand pounds to make up the sum needed. This then was the origin of this pretty and delightful ward—a chance conversation between an earnest-minded man, deeply touched by the sorrows he was unable to relieve, and his generous friend, whose heart caught the divine spark that warmed the other, and who practically fulfilled what that other had mentally originated. Alas! there was to-day only the sweet and sorrowful widow to see the good work of her husband: he having "entered into his rest" meanwhile; and the memorial he had designed for his father having become now his own.

He could have raised none of greater value. In old times medical students cared nothing for children's diseases, and knew nothing of them; now they are educated to understand the special nature of these diseases, and taught to give them the attention and thought they demand. And as we have learned to think that beginning at the beginning is a better system than tinkering midway, the prevention of disease in childhood is now accepted as a wiser thing than leaving the little ones to perish

miserably, or to live yet more miserably for the propagation of infirmity and distress. But there are not enough funds even yet for the perfect working of this part of the hospital; and if there were more, the Nightingale ward, which is at present closed, would be opened for the admission of children. Perhaps it will come: who knows? Great deeds invariably have their imitators; and Mr. Ralli's great deed may not be always left without its double. When it comes, there will be many a glad home round about King's College Hospital, many a helpless little sufferer will be eased of its pain, many a valuable life will be saved, and many a mother's full heart will pray for a blessing on those who have kept her hearth from desolation, and left her a life still worth the living.

I must say one word on the Fourth Ward, as it is called, close to the Ralli, because it is so pretty. It is painted a cool refreshing grey, of itself a beauty for the weary eyes of patients, to whom the ugly yellow so long in vogue must be intolerably painful in certain disorders. The walls were all festooned with wreaths of holly leaves —the leaves strung on threads, and interspersed with coloured paper flowers. They had been made by the head nurse and a few of the patients, quite unknown to the rest, and hid away until the right moment came; and then, one morning, the ward broke out into sudden greenery, and the admiration and delight of the whole hospital recompensed the workers.

In leaving the hospital, I passed through the ward immediately below the "Ralli" where all this merriment had been, and I came upon a very different scene. Screened off from the rest near the fire, lay a dying woman. It was the last hour on her dial, and her moments might almost be counted. Her husband was sitting by her, silently waiting for death to come and part them for ever. He had leave to stay there through the night—the last the poor creature would live to see. She looked like a corpse at this moment, lying as she was, absolutely still, with the bedclothes folded smoothly under her chin, her body quite motionless, her very breathing scarcely perceptible, and only her sad eyes wandering about the small space. The world had evidently gone very far away from her, and only God, and love, and death were left her. It was a striking contrast—this "above and below;" but it was an epitome of human history. She was dying as the consequence of a very simple accident originally; she had run a needle into her knee, and this was the result.

This, then, was New Year's Day in hospital as I witnessed it, and as I wish that many others had witnessed it. I left with a very full heart, feeling deeply the exquisite beauty of tenderness, and charity, with which the whole establishment seems penetrated. How I wished with my poor foreigner, that I had the "means" whereby the good works of the institution could be kept up and helped forward. For work like this is essentially dependent on means, and when these fail, the work, however much it may be needed, stops and fails too.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. BRIDGEWATER TO TAUNTON.

FAST from the Mendips, that sink now to faint blue waves in the horizon, the crow cleaves the silent air, and folds its wings upon the glittering weathercock of St. Mary's spire at Bridgewater. Yonder spread stubble fields and orchards, over what was once the vast swamp where Alfred hid himself from the Danes. Two miles away to the south-east lies fatal Sedgemoor, where the Duke of Monmouth was defeated, and many a trenched field still named after traditions of those unhappy days.

The duke landed at Lyme in June, 1685. Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Somersetshire, were soon in a flame. The day after he was proclaimed king, Monmouth entered Bridgewater, and was welcomed by the mayor and aldermen, who led him in procession to the High Cross. He took up his residence at the castle, and in the Castle Field his six thousand followers were encamped. The men had few pikes and muskets, and many of them carried scythes. His cavalry were mounted on rough hairy colts, just taken from the marshes, and almost untamed.

After many purposeless marches and countermarches, Faversham came down upon him with two thousand five hundred regulars, and fifteen hundred Wiltshire militia—strong, stubborn shepherds from the Plain, and tough farmers from the borders of Dorsetshire, and they encamped at Middlezoy, and on the moor beyond Chedzoy. Poor irresolute Monmouth, who had only recently abandoned the notion of flight, resolved on a night attack. His Puritan preachers harangued the troops. Ferguson, a fanatic rascal, who was his chief's adviser, took for his text the ominous words:

"The Lord God of Gods, the Lord God of Gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know. If it be in rebellion, or in transgression, against the Lord, save us not this day."

The moon was full, and the northern streamers were dancing; but a thick white marsh fog was creeping up from the banks of the Parrett. Monmouth and his forty bodyguards rode out of the castle as the clock

struck eleven. He looked desponding, so people thought. His army marched up what is now called the War-lane, towards the dykes of Sedgemoor, where Faversham's men were revelling. Monmouth led the foot; Grey, the horse. No drum was to be sounded, no shot fired. The word for the night was "Soho." About one in the morning the rebels were on the boggy moor. Three broad ditches filled with water lay between them and the enemy. Their ammunition waggons remained behind. The pike and scythemen passed the Black Ditch by a muddy causeway. The second causeway, that over Longmoor Rhine, the guide missed in the fog, and the third, over Bussex Rhine, he had forgotten. The new recruits, rough ploughmen and fishermen, became confused. Some of King James's Horse Guards seeing them advancing, fired their carbines, and rode back to rouse the troopers at Weston Zoyland. Dumbarton's regiments beat to arms. Monmouth moving forward fast, suddenly found himself stopped by the yawning darkness of Bussex Rhine.

"For whom are you?" cried a hoarse voice across the trench.

"For the king."

"What king?"

"King Monmouth," and then the rebels shouted their war cry, "God with us!"

The reply was a blazing volley, that sent the wild marsh horses to the rightabout; they never rallied again. Just then the rebel infantry came running up, and fired across the dark trench, steadily, but too high. The Life Guards and Blues scattered the fugitive cavalry, and the waggoners fled wildly with the powder waggons. Monmouth was left, without cavalry or ammunition, shut in between the trenches of Sedgemoor. The duke showed good blood: he snatched a pike, rallied his men, and led them, as day broke, over the causeway. But Faversham was now on the field, and Captain Churchill was massing the royal infantry. Then Monmouth fled.

The rebels held out, though hemmed in by the Life Guards and the Blues. Accustomed to wield flails and mining tools, Monmouth's men were stubborn with their scythes and musket butts. They beat back Oglethorpe, and struck down Sarsfield. Their incessant cry was, "Ammunition, for God's sake, ammunition!" Just then the king's guns dashed up from the Bridgewater-road, the Bishop of Winchester having lent his coach horses and traces for the purpose. There was a want of gunners; but the king's officers helped to load, point, and fire, and sent the shot tearing through the ranks of rebel pikes. They wavered, they retired, they broke. Then, straight through the hot smoke, the Blues swept down with savage swords, and Faversham's infantry came streaming across the ditch. The Mendip miners held out bravely for a minute or two, but they were soon felled or ridden down. Then the rout was total, and the moor was covered with shouting and screaming men. Three hundred of the king's soldiers lay dead beside Bussex Rhine, and a thousand rebels strewed the moor.

Faversham ordered many of the prisoners to instant execution. Among these was a young Somersetshire lad famous for his swift running. Faversham, with a brutal laugh, made him a promise of life, if he would outrun one of the wild marsh horses. A halter was tied to his neck and attached at the other end to the horse, on which a soldier sat to urge the animal to the fullest speed. The prisoner, maddened by the hope of life, leaped away and actually kept up with the horse for three quarters of a mile, from Bussex Rhine to Brentsfeld Bridge. The cruel general, rather enraged than pleased at the performance of the tremendous feat, instantly ordered the young rebel to the gallows. Another prisoner was more fortunate. He had to leap for his life—so far in three leaps. He leaped madly, and at the third bound dashed headlong into an adjoining wood, and escaped pursuit. His name was Swayne, and three stones on the Shapwick estate are still pointed out as Swayne's Jumps. The next day there was a line of twenty gibbets on the road leading from Weston Zoyland to Bridgewater, and on every gibbet swung a rebel. A day or two afterwards, a gaunt, greybearded man, in a shepherd's dress, was seized in a field of pease on the borders of Hampshire. It was Monmouth. A few months later Jefferies opened the Bloody Assize in Somersetshire, and in a few days hung, drew, and quartered two hundred and thirty-three prisoners. Every village green, church porch, and market-place was rendered loathsome by heads stuck on poles, or corpses hung in irons. Monmouth perished on Tower-hill, and Faversham was made Knight of the Garter and Captain of the First Life Guards.

In an Elizabethan house in Mill-street, Bridgewater, the great Admiral Blake was born. His father was a merchant, his mother the co-heiress of a knightly family. A blunt, bold, honest man, he distinguished himself during the civil wars at the head of his troop of horse, surprising Taunton and defending it desperately during two sieges. His services to the Parliament were of the most splendid kind; he destroyed the Royalist fleet, took the Channel Islands, and beat the Dutch from the narrow seas. He bullied the Dey of Tunis, and with incredible daring sailed into the bay of Teneriffe and burnt some Spanish galleons which he could not carry off. He died on his return home, just as he was entering Plymouth Sound. Blake did not commence his naval career till he was fifty years of age, yet he became one of our greatest admirals. Clarendon says he was the first who disdained to keep his ship and men out of danger, and to teach sailors to despise land forts, which he proved to be more noisy than dangerous. When people expressed their scruples of serving Cromwell, Blake said nobly, "It is not our business to mind state affairs, but to prevent foreigners fooling us." His most desperate action was off the Goodwin Sands, when he bore down on Van Tromp's eighty vessels with only forty men-of-war, but was beaten off,

losing six ships. Van Tromp then sailed through the Channel proudly, with a broom at his masthead to show that he had swept the English from the seas. Blake, however, was no man to bear this; three months after he swooped at a Dutch convoy of merchantmen of eighty vessels, and captured eleven men-of-war and thirty merchantmen—a glorious prize. Blake was as honest as he was brave, and after all the galleons and plate vessels he had taken did not leave five hundred pounds behind him. The Royalists cast Blake's bones out of Westminster Abbey, but they could not erase his name from our history.

Straight as a black-plumed arrow the crow bears on from Bridgewater to the Isle of Athelney, once a swampy forest, where King Alfred sheltered himself for a year in a neatherd's cottage from the Danes. From these river-side marshes he made those forays on the Danes that culminated in his great Wiltshire victory. While at Athelney, tradition has it that he lost a favourite jewel of gold and enamel, which had been fastened to a necklace. Dropped in the underwood, trodden into the river sand, fallen among the rushes or the ferns, the ornament remained for centuries in the Athelney earth, unclaimed, unseen, till, extraordinary to relate, it was turned up by chance in the seventeenth century. It is now in the Ashmolean Museum, and is one of our most precious relics. Oval in shape, and of Byzantine workmanship, it bears the inscription, "Alfred had me made."

The crow pauses over Halswell House to recal an old tradition about the Tyntes—an old crusading tradition it is, for the family has been planted here on the Milverton road longer than the oaks of their domain. The first Tynte, a young knight of the Arundel family, fought bravely at Ascalon, riding down the Saracens till the white housings of his horse were bordered crimson deep with Infidel blood. Richard Cœur de Lion, who had observed him hewing among the Moslem sabres, declared that the maiden knight had borne himself like a lion, and had done work enough for six crusaders, whereupon he conferred on him for arms, a lion argent on a field gules, between six crosslets of the first, and for motto, "Tynctus cruore Saraceno."

The crow flies faster as it approaches Taunton, till its broad wings flap rejoicingly over the pleasant town above the river Tone. The landscape is purely English; the vale, studded with orchards, is green with pastures, cottages, manor-houses, and village spires are scattered over it "in gay abundance" to the very foot of the blue Quantock and Blackdown hills, that rise like huge waves in the far horizon. Taunton used to be famous for its cloth manufacture, and the vale was so fertile with "the zun and zoil" alone, that there was a quaint Somersetshire saying mentioned by Fuller: Ch' was born at Taunton Dean; where should I be born else?

The crow has only to alight on St. Mary's rich-carved tower to gather up as many legends as there are grains of wheat in a corn-field. Early in the civil wars the town was besieged by Sir Richard Granville and eight thousand licentious and rapacious Cavaliers, while Cromwell was busy at Windsor preparing for the blow shortly to be struck at Naseby. Taunton, tormented with ceaseless fire, though half taken and half burned, still held out under Blake. Many an anxious reconnoitre must Blake have made in those days from St. Mary's or St. James's towers to see where the enemy swarmed thicker round the earthworks, where the cannon blazed most, or where the hot sally of the townsmen was being most strenuously pushed forward towards the Royalist tents. Colonel Weldon was at last sent by Fairfax with four thousand men, and Granville, dreading the approach of the main Puritan body, raised the siege. From St. Mary's towers Blake must have seen, with calm delight, the enemy's masses of foot slowly loosen and scatter over the valley. But the fever had only slackened for an interval. Granville, reinforced by three thousand horse, under the dashing Goring, soon again advanced to Taunton, and shut up Weldon and his men in the half ruined town. After the heavy blow at Naseby, Fairfax, however, drove Goring's Cavaliers from Taunton, beat them at Lamport, and took Bridgewater, with a king's garrison of two thousand six hundred men.

In this second siege, when the Cavaliers were again raging round the town, Blake behaved like a Roman of the old rock. The streets round the Priory and King Ina's Castle were soon mere hulks of shattered walls and half destroyed roofs. Ten thousand Cavaliers raged outside the ramparts, shouting for the blood of these resolute and dangerous Puritans. Shot and powder grew rapidly scarce, and the fire from the town perceptibly slackened, except at those volcanic moments when Goring tried to storm. Food, too, grew scarce. No droves of oxen now from the valley, no fat sheep from Mendip Downs. The soldiers became pale and hollow-eyed, the women silent and hopeless, the children querulous and fretful. Blake had already announced his intention of putting the garrison on rations of horse-flesh. There was only one hog left in the town, and this animal was too useful to be eaten. Poor wretch! led round the walls daily, it was whipped at intervals, to induce the Cavaliers to think that fresh supplies had been secretly thrown in.

The people's spirit never failed. As for Blake, he swore he would eat his boots before he surrendered, though the enemy had shown their fierce faces already at a practicable breach, and had even planted cannon in part of the suburbs. At last the storm begun to clear; one May day the enemy's fire relaxed. There were shouts and counter shouts; the king's banners receded; the tents were lifted. Fairfax came dashing in. The town was relieved; the siege was over. That eleventh of May remained a festival for a century after that. After the Restoration, when every turncoat was drinking the king's

health on his knees, the Taunton men kept this holiday with stubborn faith and truth. The court, vexed at this, and roused by Tory remonstrances from Somersetshire, filled up the Taunton moat, and demolished the wall that had held out so gallantly, backed by the brave Somersetshire hearts behind it. The puritanical fervour was kept up in Taunton by the preaching and exhortation of that celebrated Dissenter, Joseph Alleine, author of the still well-known tract "The Alarm to the Unconverted." He was thrown into prison by the Cavaliers, and died worn out by toil and persecution; but his precepts were not forgotten.

No wonder, then, that when Monmouth arrived he was eagerly welcomed as a deliverer from the Papists. Every door and window in Taunton was adorned with flowers. The men wore green boughs in their hats. A procession of girls presented Monmouth with an embroidered flag woven with royal emblems. It was here evil advisers urged the son of Lucy Walters to allow himself to be proclaimed king in the market-place; King Monmouth—within twenty-four hours he had set a price on the head of his hook-nosed uncle, and forbidden people to pay the usurper's taxes. As the doomed army marched on the twenty-first of June from Taunton, Ferguson, the duke's worst adviser, spy and a conspirator, waved his sword and cried out to the Taunton townspeople in the craziness of vanity—

"Look at me—you have heard of me. I am Ferguson, the famous Ferguson, the Ferguson for whose head many hundred pounds have been offered."

And this was the duke's prime minister—fitting minister for such a pretender!

After Sedgemoor, the dreadful vengeance of James fell fiercely on Taunton. Faversham left at Bridgewater, Colonel Percy Kirke, a cruel licentious soldier, who had served against the Moors at Tangier, and acquired there all the African's sensuality and hardheartedness. He had persecuted the Jews, flogged, and even murdered, his soldiers, and extorted bribes; his regiment, the most savage and dissolute in the service, was known ironically as Kirke's Lambs. They bore on their flag a Paschal Lamb as a sign they had fought against the Infidel. Taunton trembled when this monster entered the town, followed by two carts full of wounded and groaning rebels, and by a drove of pale prisoners chained two and two. That same night many of Monmouth's men were hung without a trial from the sign-post of the White Hart. No shrive, no leave-taking. They were strangled like dogs by the mocking and brutal soldiers. The officers of Kirke's regiment caroused at the windows while the executions went on, and drunk a health every time a rebel was thrown from the ladder. When the poor wretches' legs quivered, Colonel Kirke ordered the drums to strike up. "We'll give the rebels," he said, "music for their dancing."

One poor fellow they hung and cut down twice. Each time he was asked if he repented of his treason, and on his saying no, that if the thing was to do again, he would do it, they hove him up. The third time they let him die, and so ended his agony. The butcher who quartered the bodies that were to be sent to the villages all round Sedgemoor stood ankle-deep in blood. One degraded fellow suspected of leaning to Monmouth, they compelled to assist in steeping the rebels' limbs in pitch. Macaulay in his powerful way says: "He afterwards returned to his plough, but a mark like that of Cain was upon him. He was known through his village by the horrible name of Tom Boilman. The rustics long continued to relate that though he had by his sinful and shameful deed saved himself from the vengeance of the Lambs, he had not escaped the vengeance of a higher power. In a great storm he flew for shelter under an oak, and was there struck dead by lightning." It is said that Kirke put one hundred prisoners to death, the week which followed the battle. The savage was at last recalled by James, chiefly because he had sold safe conducts to rich fugitives, who were willing to embark for New England.

But Taunton had no reason to rejoice when the sound of Kirke's drums died away down the valley, for the Bloody Assize was about to commence, and Jefferies had just accepted the Great Seal. King James, in parting, had presented him with a blood-stone ring, earnest of future favours. In Hampshire he had condemned an amiable lady to be burned alive for merely sheltering two fugitives. It was reported that at Dorchester, when the clergyman preached mercy in an assize sermon, Jefferies had grimly grinned. In a few days after he hung seventy-four persons. He advanced by degrees to the full harvest of death. All the time the judicial butchery was going on, he swore, blustered, laughed, and joked like a drunken man. He roared that he could smell a Presbyterian forty miles off. "That impudent rebel," he shouted to a contumacious prisoner, "to reflect on the king's evidence! I see thee, villain—I see thee already with the halter round thy neck." One poor trembling wretch said he was on the parish. "Then I'll ease the parish of the burden," Jefferies said, "hang him!" He even boasted that he had hung more traitors than all the judges since the Conquest. Many of the rebels died very bravely. Abraham Holmes, an old Cromwellian, having had his arm shattered at Sedgemoor, amputated it himself, and apologised for going awkwardly up the ladder. A lad of family named Hewling died with such calm fortitude, that his conduct touched even the soldiers.

When Jefferies entered Taunton, the pen where the sheep to be slaughtered lay thickest, he declared openly in his charge that it would not be his fault if he did not depopulate the place. The poor girls who had presented the standard to Monmouth were all thrown into prison, though some of the poor little things were children under ten years of age. They had only carried the flag at the request of their

schoolmistress. The sword fell on them ruthlessly, one sickened in prison, where fever prevailed, and died there. Another poor girl, pleading for mercy to Jefferies, was handed over by him to the jailer, and died of despair in a few hours. The Tory member for Bridgewater undertook to exact seven thousand pounds as the ransom of these children. That sum was to be the booty of the maids of honour, for even James's queen was at this time sharing in the confiscations and the sale of slaves to the plantations. The ransoms thus obtained at this time were very large — one gentleman paid Jefferies fifteen thousand pounds. Roger Hoare, a merchant of Bridgewater, disbursed one thousand pounds. Hundreds of poor Somersetshire men were sent as slaves for ten years to the West Indies. The voyage out was terrible indeed. Wounded rebels, never visited by surgeons since Sedgemoor, were thrown in heaps into the holds of small cranky vessels. The sharks soon had half of them. They could neither stand up nor sleep. Rotten biscuit and foul water were given them scantily and at long intervals. They were not suffered to go on deck for weeks together, and armed men guarded the hatchway. Every hold was a seething mass of groaning misery. Death alone showed mercy to those unhappy men. In one vessel alone, twenty-two convicts out of ninety-nine died before the vessel reached Jamaica, though after an unusually quick journey.

After the assizes, as Fox says, all the west became an Aceldama, nothing was to be seen in it but forsaken walls, dismal gibbets, and ghastly carcases. At last Jefferies proposed "to jog homewards" after his campaign, having transported three hundred and eighty-five persons and hung ninety-seven. Then came the cruel confiscations and greedy divisions of the property of those dead men whose heads scowled over the church porches, or whose bodies hung beside the park gates. The Bloody Assize will never be forgotten in Taunton.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XIV.

WEDNESDAY.—Arose after one of those *weary* nights with heart very *sore*, having awakened in great trouble. A sense as if a great blow had fallen on me: and a short way off, on the table, I could see the fatal silver pile. Yet I looked at it, not with disgust, but with a strange interest, much as a woman does on a faithless admirer whom she still loves. There they were piled up in that almost picturesque disorder into which piles of money fall, and then came the unworthy consolation, of which I feel ashamed, and yet which has force, namely, "that it turned out well on the whole," and there was no harm done. And yet had there been loss there should not have been a bit of difference. Yes, it shall go to the poor—the Lutheran and the Catholic poor, in equal shares, and I must add a couple of pieces to make it round, and as a little penalty. Somehow these early grey hours of the morning do make one feel so wretched. It is the only drawback of early rising. Have something on your mind, rise betimes, and walk a little through a lonely town, and you will see your trouble laid in the blackest colours. After breakfast, towards noon, it fades out. Rising for a journey, at, say, five, makes me utterly miserable and low spirited. Now I must train myself a little. Another man would let this prey on him: I shall put it away from me: it is no use, it is unmanly, whining over anything that cannot be recalled. Why, when we see the Bishop of ——'s nieces "putting down," the Bishop himself reading the Times just outside, it cannot be the unpardonable sin exactly.

See how a little fall of this sort brings its own inconveniences. The dean, who has not noticed me for a long time, stopped me in the walk.

"Fie! fie!" he said. "Is this the end of the good thoughts and pious sentiments? Ah! Did I not warn you, my friend?"

Now, my dear Dora and darling, you see I set all this down as a little lesson. And I am not ashamed of it. I answered him without anger:

"I deserve your reproof, Mr. Dean. We are not all perfect, and you have often, I dare say, repeated in the pulpit a number of times, A just man will fall. Over such a fall, however, there is no ground for congratulation, or, as the vulgar would say, chuckling." On that I turned away.

Receive a telegram from the merchant, at Frankfort, saying he will be at his house at four, and sign the papers, if I bring them and an English witness. I am not sorry to hear this, for it was hanging over me that I might be kept here for an immense time. I should be glad to be home, my health is almost restored, and I have no doubt an easy journey, with a little lingering at some of the noble and curious towns on the road, would be more profitable than the waters. I feel a "flurry" beginning in this place. It is living in a heated ball-room; but who shall I get as a witness? *I* know no one. Grainger came in as I was writing. The very man. And yet I don't like quite admitting him to *that* confidence. It is too familiar; but as I shall

be leaving now very soon, it really makes no matter. To-morrow I shall seriously *begin* to think of fixing the day of departure—the next day still think of it—the third day *fix* it; the fourth day unfix, and put it off two days. Then *begin* to think again. In this way, said an old officer to me—at dinner, of course, the invariable time we form acquaintances—you discount and get value for every hour of your time. Each of these stages is a reprieve; otherwise the time slips away, and you are going before you have begun to enjoy yourself. Grainger was delighted to come. An expedition to Frankfort, he said, was the only thing that kept him up "in this hole." Accordingly we set off. I had some misgivings about taking him; but the reflection occurred that I might be saving him from temptation, and that bringing him back to taste these more innocent joys of life, might touch some old chord. Then really, pet of mine—comic as the notion may seem to you—I appeared to myself to be acting as a sort of special missionary to this place; really as benighted as were the Fee Jee Islanders. I know I am weak enough at home, dear, and anything but missionary like; but still this will be laying up a little treasury, a small deposit account on which I may hereafter draw, and say to myself, "Well, that time at Homburg, I did, or tried to do, some little good, and succeeded." What a strange old town. So quaint, so original, so fine, so ancient. I could have lingered on hours there, but I felt there was business before me, and I had no right to make holiday of it. We went straight to the merchant's house, and found him in. He was evidently a ci-devant Jew; he could not disguise those features, and a *hard* Jew also. I produced the deeds and papers. The signing was done speedily, and the money paid down. It was to be lodged in the Frankfort Bank in my name. Nothing could be more satisfactory. My friend, Mr. Bernard, directed me so to do until he sent me instructions as to its disposal, and there I think he will own, I have worked it favourably for him to the end. He will not object either to the little benefice I have made out for him, uninstructed. I dare say he will be more pleased at that, trifling as it is, just as the barrister or doctor does not like to have the shillings kept back out of his guineas. I was greatly pleased with Grainger. Grainger seemed a little surprised at my knowledge of business and savoir-faire, dealing so easily with a Jew banker, who is supposed to be up to all the tracasseries of money.

"Why," he said as we went out, "one would think you had been brought up in Frankfort, and were accustomed to meet these chaps. I couldn't have held my own to that cormorant as you did; but I have got cowed, I suppose."

"My dear Grainger," I said, "if you want to know the secret, it will come from a little self-reliance: I have something I can depend upon *here*. A man will swing himself across a precipice by a thin rope which you will be afraid of, simply because he *knows* and has tried its strength. There is the whole mystery, Grainger; and if I could only bring you to rely on your own heart, which is *true*, I know, and not be led here and there passively, the helpless victim of every idle whim and inclination——" He said nothing. I could see he was sunk in thought. In this way, by a sort of implied contrast, and not by officious ill-judged canting and preaching, which some of the "good people" would have thought the best, I know enough of the world to have discovered that we work these things out for ourselves best. We came home in great spirits.

"What will you do with all that money?" he said.

"We shall go straight and lodge it at the bank," I answered. And we did so.

"My God!" he said, in a low voice, "if I had that money, I should be ashamed to own to you the frightful idea that would occur to me. What a humiliation!"

"You would hardly be able to pass the kursaal without going in," I said gravely. "Well, there is no humiliation in being tempted—the best and bravest have been. The crime, the humiliation is in another direction. I don't think the worse of you, Grainger, for that confession."

Coming from the railway I meet the young husband and wife, he walking in front "brutally," both so changed. He had an angry and determined look that was almost ferocious. She was pale and scarcely able to walk. Their luggage very small, and I daresay, shrunk away, like the rest of their means, followed them on a man's shoulder. *There* was a splendid achievement on the side of Mephistopheles and Co. Sweet morsels for them—stripping the young and the innocent—surely the vengeance of Heaven should overtake such wretches—fire should come down from heaven, or rather by a simpler process, it is no sin to wish that a common earthly

conflagration would break out in the night and engulf their gaudy salons des jeux, their tables, rakes, devilish engines—and above all their ill-gotten pillage — their heaps of notes and stores of gold.

Of course a sharp *friend*, or the smooth dean, if he heard me, would remind me about those few bits of silver won the other night. There are people always ready with a "tu quoque." I have not the slightest scruple about that now. I may say I did it to show my power. I did it of my own motion. I take it, Mr. Dean, the distinction is this, and it would do you no harm for your next sermon. One is tempted and yields—*that* is a fall. One does the same action, *not* from temptation or yielding, but purposely, with one's eyes open—that is another matter, Mr. Dean. I can indeed smile at myself when in that little trouble the other night; very natural and excusable. The poor, at all events, will be able to congratulate themselves.

A letter from my darling Dora, to whom I shall write about my little despoiling of the Philistines. Of course she will look grave at first, like some of the soi-disant "good people;" but she could not be expected to understand the matter. *She* is good indeed; nor will I use the vulgar comparison, significant of a covetous mind, "as good as gold." My sweet Dora! I have half a mind to buy her a trinket out of a few florins of "the winnings," and not tell her at first until it is round her pretty neck. No. I suppose I had better let the poor have every florin that I promised to them.

How prettily she turns her letters. There's where a woman's strength is, if they knew it—nature, simplicity. A little bunch of violets tumbles out. It has travelled all the way from Datchley. "I send it to you," she says, "to show you that my cough and cold are quite gone, for I gathered them myself." Sir Richard Steele could not have put it more prettily.

There is also an official letter, with the seal of our bank, which I know very well. When you are at a long distance from home, in the midst of a little carnival, home news are received for the first moment with joy—then with mistrust. You know what is coming. It is like the moment before the ball leaps into its cell. (How these odious associations cling to me!) It is from Maxwell, the manager—I know his cruel cold hand. He writes as stiffly as if he did not know me. He tells "Dear Sir" that he is instructed by the Board to require my return, at furthest, within a week from the receipt of this note, as they understand I am now perfectly restored to health. He was directed to say the Board were a little surprised at my not showing more alacrity in corresponding to the very great indulgence with which I had been treated — an indulgence which was intended for an urgent case of sickness, and not to promote amusement. They must peremptorily insist on my return by the day named.

Upon my word this is quite a new tone! And what have I done to merit such language—the language almost of a Russian to his serf—language which none of them, if I were in my old situation of a *gentleman*, none of them *dare* to address to me? In these offices they are always glad to be "down" on the gentleman. But there is something behind this. . . . To be sure. Did not the dean say he had a nephew or cousin in the bank whom he hoped I would be kind to? Ah, *this* gentleman wants my place, and the dean has written to him about me. I have a good mind to throw up the whole thing, write them back a resignation, and have done with them and their bank. What right have they to assume I am staying here for pleasure? And the fallacy of it, into which their dull minds have fallen! They do not see that this very amusement was the cure prescribed, and which I came officially to seek. I have a good mind to let them have their beggarly place. One hundred and thirty pounds a year! Why, only yesterday, *I saw four times that sum earned in one minute!* and it will take me just four long weary years of life to earn that beggarly sum. That villain Maxwell—this is *his* work. He has plotted this; he has never forgiven my foiling him that time, and getting away in spite of him. And now I have to return to submit to his tyranny and slavery. It was that, I solemnly believe, that helped to make me ill before. Well, this is all folly; I must submit and suffer. After all, how much have I to be thankful for! . . . I shall start to-morrow evening; pack up in the morning. It will be a relief to get away, for I am getting nervous and excited in presence of these temptations. And yet I feel not a little pride, for I have steered my little bark successfully, on the whole, and have defied Satan and his works. As for those few pieces of silver, I can smile at that now. I shall enjoy myself to-night.

I go in among them once more this evening, and own to my pet, that so far

from any scruples detaining me, I entered with something of the severe, stern, purpose with which a policeman enters a low den of thieves and looks round searchingly to see that no villany is hatching. He is not contaminated by that association, for he is doing his duty. So do I feel among them, but not of them—with those croupiers, the Fagins, Sikeses, and Dodgers of the place, pursuing genteelly what is no better than "cracking a crib." I would give the Fagins and others, one half less penal servitude than these rascals. . . . Certainly it is the most curious spectacle, far above any human interest. And such wretched, little, mean, low glimpses. The woman who pillages a wretched florin and goes through a perfect row, is insulted by the croupiers, is hustled by the servants —all to get a miserable one-and-eightpence! A gold piece drops on the ground; the owner will not hear of any one stooping to look for it, and sternly keeps the space clear about it till the servant comes with a light. *That* fellow, too, would never succeed in finding it; it would travel up his sleeve, unless there was an honourable understanding of a deduction for his service of at least ten per cent. These familiars thrive and fatten on the gamblers; spoils pour in on them, in every conceivable way. One encumbers the successful gambler with obtrusive help about his hat—a florin; another has a bag of old gloves, which he pins down round the table, when the play begins. These dirty symbols keep places—a service to be remunerated with florins. I look at the man on the high stool behind, who is the detective, and whose duty it is to watch and measure and pay, and, above all, *support* his understrappers with the air of a sort of disinterested bystander, who *must* interfere, at the last moment, with his impartial testimony. This is rather too good. What a set!—so harmonious and consistent in all their associations! "Gang" is the ruder but more appropriate word. Not one of them, I can see, likes me; they look at me with distrust; they know what I think of them, how I could expose them, and *strip them of some of their gains*, if I chose. The "black" man, as I call him, who is something between a "betting man" and an upper turnkey, overheard me directing the young girl how to win, and the look of distrust and dislike he gave me was indescribable. He would like to have called up two of his bullies in the gold lace, to have hustled me out—*if he dared*. . . . At this moment they were beside me, and he is staring impudently into their faces — that gross stare which only a Frenchman can give.

"Oh, Mr. Austen! You will help me, as you did the other night!"

I looked a little grave. "That was under protest," I said; "and for one night only, as they say of the actors."

"But it is not that; it is not for the money; it is for your miraculous system. It is like magic."

"Give me your money," I said, "and we will see. But you will understand—I merely do this as an experiment, to oblige a young lady."

The usual luck followed. I waited till the colour had turned up four times in succession, and then laid on the opposite. We won—only a few francs—but quite sufficient for her. I cannot say how elated I was at this control of mere chance.

Ten o'clock.—O shame, humiliation! that I should have been such a dupe and fool! I could beat, lash myself. But I must write—write, if only to justify myself. That man did it on purpose, I know he did; and that I should have trusted him! . . . After they had gone, I somehow felt myself in great spirits—a sort of elation and a sense of happiness I have not known for a long time. Grainger comes up. I think he had been drinking a little.

"Every one," he says, "is talking of your great luck. There is no system going like yours."

"It is only the system of good sense, Grainger," I say, in my banal stupidity.

"Then why not help me," he went on, "as you helped that young girl?"

"Because," I said; "that is a different matter. You are bound to me not to play."

"Well, leave me out of the business; but I think you are bound to do something for yourself and your family. A man that wants a hundred pounds, and could turn it by an hour's work, is sacrificing a little too much to his principles; it's selfish, my friend."

He said no more, but—shall I own it?—those vile words began to ring in my ear like a chime—"selfish! selfish!"—so it seemed. A dazzling prospect seemed to rush in on me. All our little debts, overdue—baker and butcher, the clothes for the children, for which my poor pet had to go, with humiliation, to that coarse Wilcox, "to beg for a little time." Selfish! It was so—to expose my darling to that! I might come home, not rich—no, I did not want a hundred pounds, or two hun-

dred, but even forty, thirty, twenty. What a surprise, what an aid that would be! And it would be some enjoyment to diminish the huge gains coming to *them*, even by what I should be able to take from them. I know not what came over me at that moment. The walls of restraint seemed to topple down, as at the sound of a trumpet. For a second the whole seemed harmless and allowable. I saw cheerful faces round, smiles of enjoyment, for every one seemed to be winning, stooping down eagerly and picking up money with laughter and a sort of exultation. I could not resist, and, stretching over a sitting player, who was very impatient, I laid down my five-franc piece as the ball began to spin. I had no nervousness, but even a sort of assured confidence. I had chosen the most judicious moment conceivable; red had "gone" already six times, and I had even nearly lost a chance. I was thinking how curious it would be if I was to trace further wealth to that solitary little piece, when the click came, the ball was at home, and then the pause—"ROUGE PAIR ET PASSE!" In went my silver piece, swept in venomously. It was like a blow; it chilled my heart, and seemed like an omen. Worse, I saw D'Eyncourt opposite with the two young girls, smiling and pointing. With the usual instinct, my hand flew nervously to my pocket, as if fearful of being late—my fingers were trembling and convulsively grasped *three* heavy pieces. That would bring all back with a handsome benefice. D'Eyncourt was watching and smiling, and I saw him take the young girl's money from her, and put it down on the contrary division to mine.

Red again! Another numbing shock! What I felt was, not repentance or disappointment, but anger, something like rage even, and a determination not to be beaten. I am amazed at myself, when I think that my next step was to lay down two napoleons with faltering touch. It seemed to me I could not lay them down fast enough. Round went the ball with its monotonous burr; then the click, and that croupier, with a satanic sneer, announces red again!

Dare I own to myself, think for a moment, what I have done? It seems to make my brain quiver. Oh! oh! what a fall! Ten bright golden pieces! That would pay and pay again all her little bills. Oh, wretch! Selfish! selfish! What *am* I to do? Go back at once—to-morrow—to-night! Get away from this hellish place—walk—travel third class—submit to every privation, and thus get some of it back. *Get some of it back!* Oh, how my pulse flutters! Yes, what I *did* before! Why not now? The luck may be for me. Yes, there is time still, now. I must not be childish or ridiculous. What if I venture, I say, two gold louis, and solemnly vow and swear before Heaven, on my bended knees, not to go beyond that? There is little or no difference between ten and twelve. One man, last week, on two florins, won his thirty napoleons. I saw him. . . . Now I just say to myself, very calmly, "Let me look into this matter quietly. I am not a fool—an impulsive, ridiculous soul. *What is ten pounds after all?* To be racked by remorse, my equilibrium upset, all for ten pounds!"

"Consider, sir," said Johnson, "what a trifle this will appear to you in a year!"

After all, I am not *quite* a child, to be brought to account for spending its pocket money—and I that have scraped, and coined my poor brain and wits, into *many* a ten pounds, for my family—it is hard that I should be brought to book for what a hundred men in my case would do, and say nothing about. It *was* foolish and impulsive; but, God knows, if we are to be brought to book for every trifle, life would be simply wretched. . . . What I *do* blame myself for, is my not keeping my judgment steadily in hand. These interruptions, and the sneering looks of that man, made me forget the unerring law I had discovered. . . . It is amazing the mysterious power of *Zero*. . . . I saw it all through to-night, though I stupidly would not recognise it. At times, it struck me, there was a fitfulness when the laws I have discovered were suspended. Then a flash of instinct or genius must take its place. But for these distractions I could have coined money to-night. But I do not want that. I shall only just get back my own.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

CHAPTER XII. A REMOVAL.

SOME few minutes passed before Marian felt sufficiently recovered to move. The attack had been so unexpected and so brutal that she would have been perfectly paralysed by it even if the words which the boy had used had been the outpourings of mere random savagery, instead of, as they evidently were, the result of premeditated and planned insult—insult grounded on hate, and hate springing from fear. Marian's quick intelligence made that plain to her in a moment. The boy feared her, feared that she might obtain an ascendancy over his father, and get the old gentleman to advance money to Mrs. Ashurst, money that ought not to go out of the family, and should be his at his father's death, or perhaps fancied she was scheming to quarter herself at Woolgreaves, and——. Good Heavens, could he have thought that! Why the idea had never crossed her mind. She dismissed it at once, not without a half smile at the notion of the retribution she could inflict, at the thought that the boy had suggested to her what might be such a punishment for himself as she had never dreamed of.

She walked on quickly, communing with herself. So, they had found her out, had they? Tom's blurted warning was the first intimation she had had that what she knew to be the guiding purpose of her life, the worship of, love for, intended acquisition of money, was suspected by any, known to any one else. No syllable on the subject, either jestingly or reproachfully, had ever been breathed to her before. It was not likely that she would have heard of it. Her father had considered her to be perfect, her mother had set down all her small economies, scrapings, and hoardings which were practised in the household, to Marian's "wonderful management;" and however the feminine portion of the Whicher and Croker families might talk among themselves, their respect for the schoolmaster and their dread of Marian's powers of retort always effectually prevented them from dropping any hints at the schoolhouse. So Marian heard it now for the first time. Yet there was nothing in it to be ashamed of, she thought; if her poor father had been guided by this sentiment his life might have been perhaps preserved, and certainly an immense amount of misery would have been spared to them all. Love of money, a desire to acquire wealth, who should reproach her for that? Not Mr. Creswell, of whose good opinion she seemed to think first, for had not his whole life been passed in the practice, and was not his present position the result, the example to which she could point in defence of her creed? Not Maud or Gertrude Creswell, who if they had possessed the smallest spark of independence would have been earning their bread as companions or governesses. Not the people of the village, who——. Yes, by Tom's account, they did talk of her, but what then? What the people in the village thought or said about her had never been of the smallest interest to Marian Ashurst when she lived among them, and was brought into daily communion with them; it was therefore not likely that she would take much heed of it now, as she had made up her mind that she and her mother must go and live in another place, far away from all old scenes and associations, when they left Woolgreaves.

When they left Woolgreaves! Hitherto

she had not bestowed much thought upon that necessarily closely approaching event, but now she turned her attention to it. Under ordinary circumstances even, if things had gone on pleasantly as heretofore, if their stay had been made as comfortable to them, the attention of Mr. Creswell and his nieces had been as great, and the general desire for them to remain as obvious, they would have had in common decency to propose some date for the expiration of their visit. And now that Tom, who had hitherto been only a negative nuisance, had developed into a positive enemy, it was doubly necessary that they should take precaution not to outstay their welcome. Yes, they must go! Give up all the comforts and luxury, the fine airy rooms, the bedroom fires, the carriage drives, the good living, the wine, and attention, all of which combined had done Mrs. Ashurst so much good, and rendered her stronger and sounder than she had been for years—all these must be given up. And they must go away to poky stivy lodgings, with dirt and discomfort of every kind. With wretched cooking, which would turn her mother sick, and the attendance of a miserable maid-of-all-work, who would not understand any of their ways, and the perpetual presence of penury and want making itself felt every hour of their lives. The picture was so horrible, so repugnant to Marian, that she determined not to let it engross her thoughts in anticipation; it would be quite sufficient to cope with when it came, and she should require all her energies fresh and untaxed for the encounter. So she walked briskly on, and as she had now reached the village her attention was quickly absorbed by the greetings which she received, and the talk in which she had to take part.

The first greetings were from Mr. Benthall. Marian had determined that she would not go down Southwood-lane, which led to the schoolhouse, as she had no desire of encountering either master or boys in her then mood. She had not been near the school since she and her mother left the house, and she had arranged in her mind a little farewell on her part to both when she left the village. And now here was Mr. Benthall advancing straight towards her, and there was no possibility of escape, as she remembered that it was the Saturday half holiday, and that she should probably have to run the gauntlet of a score of friends. Mr. Benthall was a brisk, lively, agreeable man, with cheerfulness and pleasant manners, and plenty of small talk. He was, moreover, a gentleman and a man of the world, and he knew exactly how to pitch the key of his conversation to a young lady the daughter of his predecessor, who might or might not—Mr. Benthall's experience of human nature told him might and probably would—feel somewhat antipathetic towards him. So Mr. Benthall talked of Mrs. Ashurst, and of Mr. Creswell, and of the young ladies, and of Tom. "My friend Trollope's young charge," as Mr. Benthall spoke of him, with a somewhat malicious sparkle in his eye. And the weather was quite cold, was it not? and the frost had set in quite early, had it not? And Miss Ashurst was looking so blooming that Mr. Benthall had no need to ask her how she was, which was, indeed, the reason why he had not done so long since, but must beg her to take charge of his kindest compliments for her mother and the young ladies, and Mr. Creswell. And Mr. Benthall had taken off his well-brushed hat, and had skipped across the road in his well-brushed shapely boots, and Marian was contrasting him with that figure which was ever present to her memory, her father, bowed and shrunken, and slatternly and ill dressed, when she heard her Christian name called aloud, and Dr. Osborne, in his little four-wheeled pony carriage, drew up by her side.

"Well, Princess!" said the cheery old medico; "for since I have made you hear I may as well address you by your title—well, Princess, how goes it?"

"It goes very well, indeed, dear Doctor Osborne," said Marian, returning his hand pressure. "But why Princess?"

"Why Princess! What lower rank could a girl be who lives in a palace, over there I mean, with 'vassals and serfs by her side,' as I've heard my girl sing years ago, and all that kind of thing?"

"But surely only a princess of the Cinderella style, my dear doctor; only enjoying the vassals and the serfs, and what you call 'that kind of thing,' for a very limited time! Twelve o'clock must strike very soon, dear old friend, in our case, and then this princess will go back to the pots and kettles, and cinder-sifting, and a state of life worse than ever she has known before."

"God forbid, my dear!" said the doctor, seriously. "Which way are you going? Back again to Woolgreaves? All right, I'm driving that road, and I'll set you down at the gates. Jump in, child. I

wanted a few minutes' talk with you, and this has just happened luckily; we can have it without any interruption."

He stretched out his hand, and helped Marian into the seat by his side, then gave the brisk little pony his head, and they rattled cheerily along.

"Let me see, my dear. What was I saying?" said the doctor, after the silence of a few minutes. "I just remember that I ought to have called in the village to see little Boyd, who's in for measles, I suspect. I must start a memorandum book, my memory is beginning to fail me. What was I saying, my dear?"

"You were saying that you wanted to talk to me—about Woolgreaves, I think it must have been."

"About Woolgreaves—the palace, as I called it—oh, yes, that was it. See here, child; I'm the oldest friend you have in the world, and I hope one of the truest; and I want you to answer my questions frankly, and without reserve, just as if I were your father, you know."

"I will do so," said Marian, after a faint flutter at her heart, caused by the notion of the little doctor, good little soul as he was, comparing himself with her dead father.

"That's right!" said Dr. Osborne. "I knew you almost before you came into the world, and that gives me some right to your confidence. Now, then, are you happy at Woolgreaves?"

Marian hesitated a moment before she replied. "Happier than I thought I could have been—yet!"

"Ah, that's right and straightforward. Mind, in all these questions I'm alluding to you, not to your mother. I know her, charming lady, affectionate, and all that; but clinging and unreasoning, likes to lie where she falls, and so on, whereas you've got a head on your shoulders, finely developed and—so on. Now, are they all kind to you at Woolgreaves? Old gentleman kind?"

"Most kind!"

"Of course he is. Never was a man so full of heart as he is! If he had only been at home when your poor father—ah, well! That's no matter now."

"What's that you said, Dr. Osborne—that about my father?"

"Stupid old fool to go blundering into such a subject! Why couldn't I have let it alone! 'Let the dead past bury its dead.' What's that I've heard my girl sing," the old gentleman muttered to himself. Then aloud—"Nothing, my dear! I was only thinking that if Mr. Creswell had been at home just at the time I dare say we might have made some arrangement, and had Godby down from St. Vitus, and then——"

"And then my father need not have died for the want of a hundred and thirty guineas! Oh, don't think I forget!" and there came into the girl's face the hard stony rigid look which Dr. Osborne remembered there so well on the night of her father's death, six months before.

"Well!" said the little doctor, laying the whip across his knees and blowing his nose so loudly that the pony shied at the noise—"well, well, dear, Mr. Creswell's absence at that particular time was, to say the least of it, unfortunate; we may say that! Now, what about the girls; are they kind?"

"Very, in their way!"

"Good!" said the little doctor, bringing his hand down with a ringing slap on the chaise apron, "I like that! dry, deuced dry! Like your poor father, that! 'In their way.' Ha, ha! I understand! Their way is not much yours?"

"They are very good tempered and polite, and press one to eat and drink a great deal, and hand chairs and footstools, and always sing when they are asked. And," added Marian, after a moment's pause, and under a fear that she had been unduly cynical, "and they are most attentive and affectionate to mamma."

"I'm delighted to hear that, for that's just as it should be, just as one would have wished it to turn out. Oh, yes; quite ladies, with all the feelings and perceptions of ladies, and talking to your mother nicely, and so on. Not too bright—not to be compared with you, or my girl. Ah, there would have been a companion for you, my dear; all soul, and such an arm for the harp, but married to the coastguard in Dorsetshire!—but still nice girls. Well, I'm glad you give me this account, my dear, for it suits exactly the suggestion I was about to make. But before I made it I wanted to be quite sure of your position at Woolgreaves, and to know for certain that you were liked by all the family."

"You are not certain of that yet, doctor! There is one of the family about whom you have made no inquiry."

"One of the family—at Woolgreaves? Oh, by Jove, Tom, Master Tom! I recollect now—a most important personage in his own esteem, and really some one to be thought of in such a matter as this. And how does Master Tom behave to you?"

"Like a ——, like a scoundrel!" cried Marian, her eyes flashing, and all the colour ablaze in her cheeks. "He has been ever since we have been there, either rude and rough, or sulky and unpleasant; but to-day, just before I saw you, not an hour ago, he met me in the fields, and insulted me in the grossest manner, talked about our poverty, and hinted that—hinted——" and the remainder of the sentence was lost in a burst of tears.

"Happy hit of mine, that!" muttered the doctor to himself. "I seem to be distinguishing myself to-day! Young ruffian that Tom. He shall have a pretty dose next time I'm sent for to him, I'll take care. Come, my dear, then, you must not mind; he's only a boy—a rude beastly boy with no manners, and no heart either, and not much chest or stomach for the matter of that. You must not mind him. It's a pity he's not nice to you, because he has a certain power in that house; and if he were to pronounce himself as decidedly in opposition to the little scheme I had in my mind, and about which I was going to talk to you, it is very probable it might fall to the ground. But there are various ways of getting over objectionable boys. Lord bless me, in my time I've taken boys into the surgery, and brought them round by a handful of acidulated drops, and have tamed the most refractory by a Tolu-lozenge."

"I scarcely think that Tom Creswell is to be bought over on such easy terms," said Marian, with a faint and weary smile. "But, doctor, what was the suggestion you were about to make?"

"Simply this, my dear. That instead of your removing into Mrs. Swainson's lodgings, which are by no means suited for you, and where I should be very sorry to see you, or into any lodging at all, you should—when I say you I mean, of course, you and Mrs. Ashurst—should remain at Woolgreaves."

"Remain at Woolgreaves? For how long?"

"Well, as romantic or thoughtless people say, 'for ever;' at all events until the condition of each of you is changed—by different means, let us hope."

"And under what conditions is this scheme to be realised? I suppose Mr. Creswell would scarcely take us in as boarders at Woolgreaves, doctor?"

"No, my dear child, no. You are pleased to be satirical, but I am in earnest. That the labourer is worthy of his hire is a principle that has been recognised for centuries, and you shall labour, and for hire. See here, this is how the thought first came into my head. Mrs. Caddy, the housekeeper at Woolgreaves, a very worthy woman, has been ailing of late, and came to consult me last week. Our climate don't do for her. She's a little touched in the chest, and must get away further south for the winter. I told her so, plainly, and she didn't seem at all uncomfortable about it. Her friends live in Devonshire, and she's saved a good bit of money, I should think, since she's been in Mr. Creswell's service. All that seemed to worry her was what they would do at Woolgreaves without her. She harped upon this several times, and at last a ray of light seemed to break upon her as she asked why her place should not be taken by 't' young girl, schoolmaster's daughter'!"

"Dear me! Mrs. Caddy's place taken by me?"

"By you! it was an irreverent way to speak of you, Marian my dear, I'll admit, but there was no irreverence intended. Mrs. Caddy once set going, launched out into an interminable list of your special virtues. There never was a girl who 'cottoned' so completely to her style of pickling and preserving, there never was a girl who so intuitively grasped the great secret of making cherry-brandy, or who so quickly perceived the short-comings of the still-room maid in the matter. And this talk of the worthy woman's gave me an idea."

"The same idea as Mrs. Caddy's?"

"The same, with a difference. Mrs. Caddy's was preposterous, mine is possible. And mine is this. When Mrs. Caddy goes, let it be understood that Mrs. Ashurst has consented to superintend the Woolgreaves household. There would be nothing derogatory in the position; all with whom she would be brought in contact would take care of that, and though she would not have the least qualification for the post, poor woman!—no affront to you, my dear, but she wouldn't—you would be able to keep all smooth, and take care that everything went straight."

"But even such an establishment as Woolgreaves would not require two housekeepers, doctor?"

"Of course it would not," said the old gentleman, pleased to see by Marian's brightening face that the proposition was not disagreeable to her. "Of course it would not. Mrs. Ashurst would be the responsible housekeeper, while your posi-

tion as companion to the young ladies could be very easily defined, and would be very readily understood. Do you like the plan?"

All the details of the proposition rushed through her mind before she spoke. Home comforts, luxury, good living, warmth, care, attention, money, or at least the command if not the possession of money, that is what it meant, instead of a wretched lodging, a starveling income, penury, and perhaps, so far as certain necessaries for her mother were concerned, want. What would they sacrifice? not freedom, they had never had it, and if their lives were still to be passed in drudgery it would, at all events, be better to be the drudge of a kind old man and two insignificant girls, than of a set of racketty schoolboys, as they had hitherto been. Position? no sacrifice there; the respect always paid to them was paid to them as James Ashurst's wife and daughter, and that respect they would still continue to receive. All in the village knew them, the state of their finances, the necessity of their availing themselves of any opportunity for bettering their condition which might present itself; and out of the village they had but few acquaintances, and none for whose opinion they had the least care. So Marian, with beaming eyes and heightened colour, said,

"Yes, dear old friend, frankly I *do* like the plan. If it were carried out an immense load of anxiety would be removed from my mind, respecting mamma's immediate future you know, and it would suit our circumstances in various ways. Is it possible? How can it be brought about?"

"You are as prompt as ever, Marian!" said the doctor, smiling; "I never saw a girl retain so many of her childish characteristics!" Marian winced a little as he said this, remembering Tom's remarks that morning on her childish character as depicted by Mesdames Whicher and Croker. "Yes, I think it is perfectly feasible, and it can be brought about by me. Mr. Creswell, having known me for many years, and believing that I never advise him but for his good, is always ready to listen to any advice I give him, and if I judge rightly, will be already predisposed to agree with this proposition, and to take it as though you and your mamma were conferring a favour on him rather than——. Dear me, look at this foolish fellow, coming towards us at full gallop! The man must be drunk! Hallo, sir, hi! hallo! Why it's one of the Woolgreaves grooms, isn't it? I think I know the man's appearance. Hallo, sir, hi! what is it?" And the little doctor pulled the chaise close into the left bank, and stood up, waving his whip, and shouting lustily.

The horseman, who was urging his horse to yet greater speed, paid no attention to the shouts, and contented himself by rising in his stirrups and waving his hand as though bespeaking a clear way, until he came close upon the chaise, when he apparently recognised its occupants, and strove to pull up his horse. With some difficulty, and not until he had shot past them, he succeeded, then turning back, he cried out, "Doctor Osborne, I was going for you, sir! for God's sake, drive up to the house at once—you're wanted, awful bad!"

"What is it?" asked the doctor. "Quiet my child, don't be alarmed, don't shake so! There is nothing happened to your master?"

"No, sir, Master Tom!"

"What of him—taken ill?"

"No sir—chucked off the chesnut mare, and took up for dead in the Five Acres! Ben Pennington was bird-scarin' close by, and he see the accident and hollerd out, and gave the alarm. And some of the farm men came and got a hurdle, and put Master Tom on it, and carried him up to the house. Master see 'em coming, and ran out and would have fell down when he see who it was, but they caught hold of him, and they say he's like a madman now, and Miss Maud, she told me to come after you. Make haste, sir, please! Hadn't you better jump on this mare, sir, she'll carry you quicker nor that cob of your'n, and I'll drive Miss Ashurst home."

"Not for any money," said the doctor; "get on that horse, indeed! There'd be another accident, and no one to be of any assistance. I shall be up at the house in a very few minutes; ride on and say I'm coming. Lord, my dear, fancy such an interruption to our conversation—such a bombshell bursting over the castle we were building in the air!"

"The doctor wishes to speak to you, miss, outside master's door," said Mrs. Caddy, in that hissing whisper which servants always assume in a house of sickness. "He didn't say anything about Master Tom, but his face is as white as white, and ——"

"Thanks, Mrs. Caddy; I'd better go at once," and Marian left the dining-room, where she had been doing her best to calm her mother's agitation, which expressed

itself in sparse tears, and head shakings, and deep-drawn sighs, and flutterings of her feeble hands, and ascended the stairs. As she gained the landing, the little doctor, who had evidently been on the watch, came out of a bedroom, shutting the door cautiously behind him, and, hastening to her, took her hand and led her into the recess of a bay window, round which was a luxurious ottoman. When they had seated themselves, Marian broke silence. "You have examined him, doctor? You know the worst?"

"I say nothing about the worst, my dear, as I just told our old friend; that is not for us to say. Poor boy, he is in a very bad way, there's no disguising that. It's a case of fracture of the skull, with compression of the brain—a very bad case indeed!"

"Does he know what has happened? Has he given any explanation of the accident?"

"None. He is insensible, and likely to remain so for some time. Now, my dear, you're the handiest person in the house, and the one with your wits most about you. This poor lad will have to be trepanned—ah! you don't understand what that is; how should you?—I mean, will have to be operated upon before he gets any relief. Under the circumstances, I don't choose to take the responsibility of that operation on myself, and, with Mr. Creswell's consent, I've telegraphed to London for one of our first surgeons to come down and operate. He will bring a professional nurse with him, but they cannot arrive until the mail at two in the morning, and as I must go down to the surgery for two or three little matters, and see some of my patients tucked up for the night, I intend leaving you in charge of that room. You have nothing to do but to keep everybody else—except, of course, Mr. Creswell—out of the room. You must not be frightened at Tom's heavy breathing, or any little restlessness he may show. That's all part of the case. Now, my child, be brave, and so good-night for the present."

"Good-night, doctor. Oh, one minute. You said you had telegraphed for a London surgeon. What is his name?"

"What on earth makes you ask that, you inquisitive puss?" said the old gentleman, with a smile. "Have you any choice among London surgeons? His name is Godby—Godby of St. Vitus!"

Godby of St. Vitus. That was the name. She remembered it at once. The man for whom Doctor Osborne had telegraphed to come and see her father, or rather would have sent for, but for the amount of his fee. Good God, what a contrast between that sick room and this! The boy had been carried into his father's bedroom, as nearer and larger than his own; and as Marian looked around on every side, her glance fell on signs of comfort and luxury. The room was very large, lit by a broad bay window, with a splendid view of the surrounding country; the walls were hung with exquisite proof prints in oaken frames, a table in the centre was covered with books and periodicals, while on a smaller table close by the bed was a plate piled with splendid grapes. The bed itself, with fresh, bright chintz curtains hanging over it, and a rich eider down quilt thrown on it, stood in a recess, and on it lay the suffering lad, giving no sign of life save his deep, heavy, stertorous breathing, and occasional restless motion of the limbs. How vividly the other room rose to her memory! She saw the ugly panelled walls, with the cracking, blistering paint, and knew the very spots from which it had been worn off. She saw the old-fashioned, lumbering bedstead, and the moreen curtains tied round each sculptured post. She remembered the roseate flash which the sunlight shed over the face of her dying father, the hopeless expression which remained there when the light had faded away. It was money, only money, that made the very wide difference between the two cases, and money could do anything. Money was fetching this clever surgeon from London, who would probably save the life of this wretched boy. What was the value of a life like this as compared to her father's? But for the want of money that sacred life had been suffered to pass away. Thoughts like these crowded on her brain and worked her up to a pitch of feverish excitement during the early part of the night. She had plenty of time for reflection, for she had become accustomed to the regular heavy breathing of the patient, and no one entered the room save Mr. Creswell, who would sit for an hour together by his boy's bedside, and then, watch in hand, get up and murmur piteously: "Will the night never go. Will the man never come!"

"The man," Mr. Godby, principal surgical lecturer and demonstrator at St. Vitus's Hospital, was coming as fast as the mail train could bring him. Unlike most of his

brethren, he was essentially a man of the world, fond of studying all sorts and conditions of men, and with all his enormous practice finding time for society, theatres, music, and literature of all kinds. He was engaged out to dinner that day—to a very pleasant little dinner, where he was to have met a private secretary of a cabinet minister, a newspaper editor, a portrait painter, a Duke, and a clerk in an insurance office, who gave wonderful imitations. The hostess was a French actress, and the cooking would have been perfect. So Mr. Godby shook his head very mournfully over the Helmingham telegram, and had he not held his old friend Osborne in great respect, and wished to do him a service, he would have refused to obey its mandate. As it was, he resigned himself to his fate, and arrived, chilled to the bone, but bright-eyed and ready-witted, at Woolgreaves at two in the morning. He shook his head when he saw the patient, and expressed to Doctor Osborne his doubt of the efficacy of trepanning, but he proposed to operate at once.

"It's all over, mother," said Marian to Mrs. Ashurst, the next morning. "Mr. Godby was right; poor Tom never rallied, and sank at seven this morning."

"God help his poor father!" said the old lady, through her tears; "he has nothing left him now."

"Nothing!" said Marian—then added, half unconsciously—"except his money! except his money!"

END OF BOOK THE FIRST.

ODD MONSTERS.

It is as good as a nightmare to look at the pictures in Schenck's History of Monsters, a little quarto book of memorable human deformities, published two hundred and sixty years ago. The author was one of the best physicians of his time, a voluminous writer who has left us a thick closely printed folio of the most interesting cases he had met with in medicine and surgery, monsters included; but the monsters have also a little volume to themselves. We start with a child all body and no head, but having windows in its breast, for there were its eyes. Then comes the son of a tailor of Mecklenburg, who had what seemed to be the faint suggestion of a face wrapped round with a great Turkish nightcap. As there seemed to be a face under a plastic mask, the mask was removed, and below was revealed a horribly great mouth which began to roar without a tongue, and eyes without pupils, behind which fire seemed to shine; there was no brain, and there were no bones to the skull, but the upper part of the head was twisted up like a tall turban. The right hand of this child was always open, the left always doubled into a fist. Doctor Schenck gives an edifying picture, after the manner of a modern Valentine, showing the child's head as it appeared before the mask was lifted. You may lift the mask here for yourself, and see what you shall see—not a cupid. It is hardly worth while to mention children with cat's heads; or with horns, and a broad mouth like a whale's, or a young shark's before its teething; or with pigtails actually growing from their necks. That latter form must, in the days of periwig, have been looked upon as a laudable effort on the part of nature, to keep pace with the fashions. One child had a goose's back and wings, another a frog's head, another large erect hare's ears. A little fellow at Stettin was born with something like a tortoiseshell on the top of his head, and a white mouse's tail peeping out from under it. There was (was there?) a child born at Basle, in fifteen hundred and fifty-six, with such wide nostrils, that his brain could be seen through them. But then another had no nose at all, nor eyes, nor ears, only a mouth, and the rest of the face blank; while another had so much room in his head that a full-sized arm grew out from where one of his ears should be. This monster had also no elbows or knees.

From the commentaries of Sigibert we are told of the child born at Emmaus in the reign of Emperor Theodosius, single below the chest, or chests, but with two chests, arms, and heads. The two heads were not better than one, for they were differently affected; one might be crying while the other laughed, one feeding, the other sleeping; sometimes they quarrelled, and there was a fight of the two pairs of arms. This child is said to have lived two years, one part dying four days before the other, which was killed by the decay of its inseparable neighbour. Cardan tells us of a Milanese girl with two heads, in all other respects single, except that she was found after death to have two stomachs. It would not have been bigamy to marry her, although in fairness she would be entitled to a husband with two heads; not the creature figured by the side of her with two monkey heads, monkey legs, and a fox's brush, but possibly the sage two-headed philosopher figured below her, one of whose heads looks very much startled at what his other head is whispering into its ear. There are gentlemen living who would find it a great convenience, and whose friends would find it a great convenience, if they could indulge in this manner their taste for conversation, and yet keep their conversation to themselves. Among the two-headed women was one in Bavaria, aged twenty-six, of whose two faces one was pretty the other ugly. In the time of Francis the First of France, there was a man with two heads, whose second head grew out of the trunk of his body, and was carried under his waistcoat. This head had a secret hunger of its own, that

no food taken by the visible mouth would satisfy.

Ancestors of Miss Biffin we can more literally believe in. A man of forty lived in Paris not long before Doctor Schenck made his collection of cases, who, being without arms, could grasp an axe with his shoulders, neck, and chin, and throw it as far as his neighbours, or in the same way hold and crack a whip with the best of them. Although he had no hands to keep from picking and stealing, he was eventually condemned for theft, and broken on the wheel. He used his toes, it is said, for eating and drinking. Dion tells that one of the gifts sent to Augustus from the Indians was a youth without arms, who used his feet skilfully in shooting with the bow. Schenck himself saw an armless woman doing needlework with her feet, and Cardan saw an armless man throw a spear, stitch a garment, eat, drink, write, and thread a needle. Two youths with the same defect played cards (but not together), one using his feet, the other his mouth and chin. An armless woman at Frankfort-on-the-Maine in 'fifteen fifty-six not only painted letters elegantly with her feet, but made with her toes very ingenious toys.

A famous armless humpback was Thomas Schweicker, a Suabian, born in 1545, whose portrait we have at the age of fifty-three. He was the Biffin of Schenck's time, in highest repute for handwriting—or, shouldn't we say, footwriting?—with his toes, and for the elegant designs which he drew round specimens of his penmanship. He excelled also in arithmetic and chess-playing, architectural carvings, delicate cutting out, bookbinding, crossbow shooting. He cut for himself his slices of bread with his feet, carried food and drink to his mouth, and with his feet also mended his own pens when he wrote. A hundred years earlier there had been a man living to old age, under the care of his landlord, who had learnt to be very helpful to himself, though he had no right hand, three fingers joined together for a left hand, and no toes upon his feet. He learnt to write well, and do many things with his misshapen and imperfect left hand.

From the people without feet we pass to the records of joint births like that of the Siamese Twins. Some have been joined by the neck, some by the forehead, some by the chest, some by the back; there are plenty of all kinds. The most interesting of these was a man of adult years, who, in 1519, showed himself in Switzerland with another and smaller body hanging from his breast, alive and complete in all parts from the neck downwards; but the head, if there was any, seemed to be contained within his chest. He bared his chest and displayed what seemed to be a living child, which had forced its head through it. The rest of Dr. Schenck's collection we will leave to the imagination of any one who, having brought himself into a state of temporary lunacy, will confine himself for six weeks to a diet of pork chops. For, after winding up the catalogue of human monsters, with a creature very like a libelled and caricatured harpy, he gives his mind to the monstrosities of brutes.

WHERE TO PUT THE LAW COURTS?

When Sir George Lewis's committee, appointed in 1858 to consider the question of the new Law Courts, made their report in favour of what is now known as the Carey-street site, the question appeared to be settled, and the destination of the Palace of Justice of the future to be finally determined; indeed, the selection at that time was universally approved, and the committee were considered to have chosen the best of the three alternatives submitted to them. The objections both to the Westminster and Lincoln's-inn sites, were sufficiently grave to leave either but few advocates; and, although it was even then admitted that the Strand and Carey-street block scarcely fulfilled all the conditions that might have been exacted, it was so clearly better than the other positions proposed, that the public readily agreed with the decision of the committee.

Matters of this sort do not usually move rapidly in this land of How Not To Do It, and accordingly it was not until 1865, or seven years after the appointment of the selection committee, that Parliament passed the Acts giving powers of compulsory purchase, and finding funds for the purpose. The suitors' fees fund was justly held to be public money, available for the great national purpose contemplated; and by appropriations from that fund the new Law Courts are to be built. The question of the cost of site and buildings now gave rise to much discussion, and Parliament was extremely desirous of seeing its way to some satisfactory estimate of the expenditure to be sanctioned by the Acts proposed. A lively recollection of the remarkable discrepancy between the estimates for, and the actual cost of, their own house, and, for that matter, of most other great public works in London, no doubt caused Parliament to dwell with particular care on this point; but the means devised to gain the end required were, to say the least, highly remarkable. By the Acts as they were ultimately passed, the powers for compulsory purchase were to remain in abeyance, until a certificate had been furnished by the commissioners that they had received satisfactory evidence that the probable cost of the lands and buildings would be covered by a million and a half of money. The commissioners, receiving a certificate from a well-known architect to the desired effect, and probably thinking a million and a half a tolerably respectable sum, expressed themselves satisfied that the work could be satisfactorily done for such sum, and, being then possessed of full powers, set vigorously to work.

The area chosen, comprised every kind of neighbourhood. Along the Strand, respectable old-established shops were the rule, diversified by not more than the usual proportion of public-houses. If the entrance courts

of one or two particularly frowsy alleys forced themselves upon the eye and nose of the passers-by, they were treated with the indifference usually accorded to such places by Londoners, and the miserable dens behind were ignored or forgotten. One of the many original eel pie shops; the establishment of the philanthropist, always anxious to supply the colonies with second-hand clothing, and who loudly proclaimed his readiness to pay a larger price than any other dealer; the emporium of the ingenious gentleman who sold the magic donkeys, which jerked convulsively in the shop window at intervals from ten to four; several eating-houses, with all the contents of the larder displayed in the window; a mysterious dark-looking house, suggestive of the old Star Chamber, approached by a long flight of steps, standing back from the Strand, and forming one side of a little open square, one corner of which was occupied by the proprietor of a stall for the sale of curious and unpleasant looking shell-fish, with clutching claws like the Income Tax collectors of the deep; the shop of the high priest of pills; the large printers' and newspaper office close by; these were the chief objects of interest between Temple-bar and St. Clement's church. Turning to the right and passing through the archway — a task usually rendered difficult by the crowd of wretched boys, who swarmed and hovered there, like wasps round the entrance of a nest—two ways were open. The road to the left led into Clement's-inn; that to the right into some of the worst slums in all this part of London. A glance at the ruffians loitering about the doors of the miserable gin shops; at the women, but one degree less ruffianly and repulsive than the men; at the youths in the inevitable greasy caps, and with the furtive sidelong looks, slinking walk, and close cut hair, of the genuine London thief, was enough to warn the passenger that it would be well for him to walk, if he must needs go that way, warily and swiftly, and with a careful eye to any articles of value in his pockets. But, as the circuit of the commissioners' land might be made by another way, the traveller would probably avoid the narrow fetid streets—filthy beyond description or belief, considering that they were allowed to exist in a civilised metropolis—where the crazy houses themselves had a guilty, police-fearing look, not unlike the wretched creatures who swarmed about their squalid thresholds, and from their over-crowded rooms showered fever and cholera broadcast through the town. Clement's-inn (though perhaps not the most desirable place of abode in the world) enjoys the advantage of light and air, and offered for a time a welcome refuge from the filth and squalor outside. Once through the inn, however, matters were as bad as ever. The poor little beetle-browed shops of Clare-market, and the poverty-stricken customers cheapening stale meat and rotten vegetables (refuse of other markets) in the narrow gutter, were but little better than the disgraceful neighbourhood on the east of Clement's-inn; to reach Carey-street it was necessary to pass a network of streets, where all the evidences of misery and squalor, destitution and crime, were repeated at every step. Once round the corner, by King's College Hospital, which rose suddenly before the adventurous traveller like some great lighthouse of beneficence and hope, and safely in Carey-street, civilisation was again approached. For, if many shady businesses were transacted thereabout, and if a good many very queer customers were to be found in the upper storeys of some of the Carey-street houses, the influences of neighbouring Lincoln's-inn were strong upon it, and the odour of law calf and clean new books fresh from the printer's, took the place of the complicated variety of evil smells prominent in the regions left behind. The solid volumes in the law publishers' windows; the legal wig-makers, with puisne judges, and even chief justices' wigs displayed temptingly in the window, exciting secret hopes in the hearts of sanguine juniors, but looked upon more coldly by disappointed seniors; these, and the passing fat red bags full of anything but faggot briefs, diffused an air of respectability and peace highly soothing to the casual passer-by—unless, indeed, he happened to have legal business of his own to transact in the neighbourhood. So, a sense of something legal in the air was noticeable in Bell-yard, albeit the law publishers in that precinct were to be found in the low company of newspaper vendors, coffee houses, cobblers, oyster shops, and all those smaller trades that seem to flourish in narrow, airless streets. Bell-yard was a great resort also of furniture brokers; and the stimulating aroma of fresh varnish flavoured the yard. Although the furniture displayed was chiefly of a business nature—office stools and desks, writing tables and bookshelves, being the chief articles in stock—it was generally supposed that any furniture dealer in Bell-yard could furnish a house, large or small, in the first style of fashion in half an hour. So, under the arch by the pawnbroker's, the wanderer from New Zealand or elsewhere, came out into the busy tide of Fleet-street. And at the little barber's shop on the north side of Temple-bar, the circuit of the Carey-street site was completed.

No time was lost in commencing the work of demolition. The Strand front went first. Lot 1, Lot 2, and so on, soon took the places of the names of the old occupiers. Windows disappeared, doors vanished, fittings of all kinds were cleared off, and then adventurous men were seen balancing their bodies far up on tottering walls, and apparently bent on pickaxing their very foothold from under themselves. Lot 1 and the rest of the lots were carted off as old building materials; foot passengers were rather inclined to give that portion of the Strand a wide berth to avoid the clouds of dust and mortar, and the falling bricks that came rattling down like hail, and occasionally shot over the protecting hoarding on to the pave-

ment. One of the houses spared the contractors some trouble, by rattling down, of its own accord, one day, into the Strand: where it lay with all its lots merged into a dusty heap of ruin. The advertisement contractors and bill posters took possession of the hoarding, and that part of the Strand is still bright with the garish colours and violent contrasts dear to the advertising heart. A perfect gallery of sensation pictures has taken the place of the magic donkeys in the affections of the loafing public. In particular one gorgeous work has just been hung, so to speak, and by a curious coincidence in the spot erst hallowed by the presence of those eccentric animals, which is worthy of all praise. A most astounding steeple-chase is coming off amidst the cheers of an excited multitude. A prodigious field of horses is undergoing every kind of sporting disaster, possible and impossible, across a country of unparalleled stiffness; and the jockeys (who seem not to have learnt the rudiments of their art), are to be seen everywhere but in their saddles. One jockey, just emerging dripping from a ditch, careless of the flight of his steed, is pointing out the beauties of the scene to the spectators, with modest pride.

The miserable rookeries were speedily dismantled, and their occupants were driven into the already overcrowded neighbourhood of Drury-lane, Short's-gardens, Charles-street and the like. This is one of our grand circumlocutional principles, which is always to unhouse the wretched when room is wanted, and to take no kind of thought of housing them again. One side of Clement's-inn was removed, and the chambers on the east side were pulled down. Carey-street and Bell-yard each lost one side, and soon the area was almost clear. Some few houses still remain; among them, the mysterious house in the square, the centre of a few other crumbling ruins. Close to Clement's-inn still linger a few buildings, doomed but not yet destroyed: a miserable sight. Some are roofless and gutted; some are sections of houses, half pulled down, with dirty paper still fluttering from the walls. Others, with which the difficulty appears to be to keep them standing until their time comes, are supported by strong timbers, over which their rotten sides bulge in a suggestive and alarming fashion. And yet, even here, in the heart of this desolation, a ricketty public-house still keeps open; some few houses not so far gone as others, are still inhabited. An enthusiastic and enterprising marine store dealer still exposes his stock of a bundle of rags, half a dozen locks, a pair of scales, and a mass of rusty metal. Privileged and secure the little barber's shop at Temple-bar still holds its own, and remains untouched.

The speculative nature of the evidence on which the commissioners had formed their financial estimate speedily became apparent. As is not unusually the case under similar circumstances, property on that particular spot was found to be remarkable for its increasing value, and leases (granted in some cases at dates curiously coincident with the first suggestion of the Carey-street site), were discovered to have risen surprisingly in value during the seven years that had passed over the heads of the fortunate lessees. Commercial enterprise must have been having a "good time of it" north of the Strand and south of Carey-street. Everybody must have been doing a roaring trade, and the roaring of the trade seemed to have all come into being in that particular seven years. The commissioners, as we have seen, expressed themselves satisfied that they could buy the site and build their law courts, at the comparatively modest outlay of a million and a half. The confiding nature of committees and the ingenuousness of witnesses have rarely been displayed to better advantage than on this particular occasion. The sums paid for the site, up to the present moment, very nearly reach a total of eight hundred thousand pounds; and the commissioners now represent this to be insufficient, and have recommended an application to parliament for an additional grant of seven hundred thousand pounds! The buildings will, doubtless, more than double the pleasant, but fallacious estimate by which the commissioners were induced to give the certificate required by the Act of 1865. It is by no means surprising, one would say, that the question of the new Law Courts should be once more attracting a great deal of public attention.

The commissioners clearly made a terrible mistake in their calculations, but as that sort of thing is not altogether unknown in the history of committees, there is nothing to be done but to grin and bear it. New Law Courts in a good position, we must have. If we have to pay three millions instead of the smaller sum which we had fondly hoped would be all that would be required of us, we shall have to find the money with as good a grace as possible. But now that the question is once more presented to us, there is one thing we can do, and that is, to take the utmost possible pains to find out in what manner we may get the best value for our expenditure. At present it is not possible to deal with the question of the buildings. The first thing to see about is the spot where the buildings are to stand; when that is satisfactorily settled, then will come the time of the architects and art critics.

Now, what are the special advantages of the site that has been acquired, and are they such as to satisfy the public that they have got the best and most convenient site, not merely for the legal profession, but for themselves as well?

It would almost seem that the commissioners of 1858 must have been influenced in their preference of the selected position to the others proposed at the same time, simply by the fact of the positive disadvantages attaching to its rivals being greater than the manifest objections to itself. For, it must surely be admitted, that considered by itself, and not as deriving an illusory and factitious excellence from being contrasted with the shortcomings of other places,

the disadvantages of the Carey-street site are very much more obvious than its advantages. In the first place—and this is a very important consideration—the area we have acquired for our eight hundred thousand pounds already expended, is ludicrously inadequate to the requirements of the profession and the public. Assuming that parliament will vote the seven hundred thousand pounds now proposed to be asked for, the ground at the disposal of the architects would even then be far too small for the great end in view. If we are to have new Law Courts at all, and if they are to cost us the enormous sum to which we appear to stand irrevocably committed, let us at any rate have a real Palace of Justice, where there shall be full accommodation, and to spare, for judges and barristers, jurymen and witnesses, suitors and public. Let there be no stinting of accommodation, no makeshifts, no turning of lobbies and passages into dim offices and courts:—expedients which have so often been forced upon unwilling architects by the exigencies of contracted space. Our new Law Courts must, in a word, be everything that the old Law Courts are not, and the first requirement is obviously—plenty of space. Our architects must have plenty of room to work in; or makeshift work and inferior accommodation become inevitable.

Light is another very serious requirement. The Law Courts, if built on the Carey-street site, might as well, except as far as the Strand front is concerned, be put down a tolerably deep shaft. They would on all other sides be entirely surrounded by buildings, and on the north-west side the huge bulk of King's College Hospital would effectually overshadow that part of the national building. Some day, also, no doubt there must come extensive rebuilding on the north side of Carey-street; and as the houses that will be erected there will most undoubtedly be considerably loftier than those which stand there now, the prospect of daylight is not encouraging in that quarter. More westerly again are the pleasant shades of Clare Market, Great Queen-street, and Drury-lane—not, on the whole, shades that one would select, and on that side also, therefore, the look-out is but poor. The Strand front is, no doubt, good; but the drawback of the disturbance caused by the noisy and interminable traffic would, there can be little doubt, drive the Courts and more important offices to more retired parts of the building, and consequently away from its better lighted portion.

What about the state of affairs outside the buildings?

The Strand is one of the most crowded thoroughfares in London, and, even now, is—in its eastern extremity in particular—totally inadequate for the stream of traffic constantly trying to flow through it. Even the removal of the south side of Holywell-street, or indeed demolition up to the south side of Wych-street, would but imperfectly relieve this great artery. For is there not Fleet-street eastward?—the narrow, inconvenient, often utterly impassable Fleet-street?

Except the Strand for the west, and Fleet-street for the east, the Palace of Justice, Carey-street, would be entirely without approaches. From the north there is no approach whatever, except Chancery-lane, with its magnificent outlet into Holborn already as full as need be. It is true that the wretched little alley in question, not wide enough for two vehicles to pass at one time, is so obviously a disgrace to the City that its removal cannot be much longer deferred, and therefore need not be seriously considered in the discussion of this question; but, given a proper entrance to Chancery-lane from Holborn, the lane itself is by no means large enough for the traffic that may be expected to flood it on its way to Carey-street. From Lincoln's-inn-fields, which itself has no good means of access from Holborn, the approach to Carey-street is by villainous little alleys round King's College Hospital; on the north-west side are the back settlements of Clare Market. Southward there is literally no approach for vehicles; the dirty and frowsy steps at the bottom of Essex-street being distasteful even to pedestrians. It is obvious that to utilise the three millions spent on the Carey-street site, a large additional expense would have to be incurred in providing proper approaches to the buildings from the north, north-west, and south. And even then we dismiss the consideration of all the additional traffic attracted by the Law Courts from the east and west. It is impossible to estimate what money, if the Law Courts take the place now designed for them, ought to be added to the calculation of their cost, in reckoning the wearisome delay, the loss of valuable time, the annoyance, the general inconvenience, and the needless vexation their situation would inevitably entail.

This matter of convenient approach affects the legal profession even more than the general public; it is of the last importance to professional men that they should be able easily to reach their places of professional resort, and that they should be able to calculate the times of their goings and comings with certainty and exactness. The new Law Courts are to be built chiefly with a view to remedy the inconveniences caused by the separation and remoteness of the old courts, but with the present approaches, and with a Strand and Fleet-street even more crowded than now—if indeed such a state of things can be—almost all the advantages hoped for would disappear, and a vast expenditure of the public money would be followed by nothing but dissatisfaction and recrimination.

The Carey-street site, though the best to be got when the original selection was made, does not meet the requirements of the case, and is not satisfactorily adapted to its destination.

What is the alternative?

At the time when Sir George Lewis's Committee was sitting, Londoners were vaguely dreaming of the possibility of rescuing the

shores of the Thames from foul mud and abominations of all sorts, of embanking the noble river, and, by narrowing the channel, and causing the stream to flow between granite walls, at once to purify it and to beautify the metropolis with handsome quays, that might challenge comparison with those of Paris and other great continental cities. What such an embankment would really be like; how much land would remain at disposal after providing for quays and roads; questions such as these had never presented themselves to the public mind. The scheme was in nubibus. The vague prospects of the Embankment at that time would have prevented it taking its place in the consideration of the question of sites for the new Courts, even if there had been any idea of its capabilities. But, in 1862 the Embankment Act was passed, and the work having been pushed on with singular vigour and rapidity, we now find ourselves in possession of, perhaps, the finest river-side work known in any age or any country.

But, besides the Embankment itself, there is a very large area of land, partly unoccupied, partly occupied by buildings of by no means a superior class, lying between Somerset House and the Temple, and which must inevitably be turned to some purpose that shall be worthy of the magnificence of the great work just accomplished. The buildings along the Embankment must be worthy of the Embankment itself. And here seems to be the solution of the question; here seems to be the escape from the difficulties and inconveniences of Carey-street.

The Thames Embankment appears to be the place of all others for the Palace of Justice; had the Embankment been planned with that view alone, it could not have been more singularly appropriate for the purpose. Let us see how the case stands as between Carey-street and the newly proposed site.

The land already taken north of the Strand has cost, as we have seen, eight hundred thousand pounds; in the event of that site being abandoned, the difference in the cost of the two sites will simply be the difference between what we have spent and what we could get for the land we have bought with the money. The estimated cost of the Carey-street site is a million and a half; the cost of the Thames Embankment and Strand site is estimated at a like amount; if it be argued that the latter estimate may go as far wrong as the original estimate of 1865 as touching the Carey-street site, it must be remembered that a large portion of the Embankment site is already waste land, and that the estimate for the buildings to be taken is at least as likely to be correct as the estimate of seven hundred thousand pounds, for which the commissioners now ask to purchase what they consider necessary for the completion of the Carey-street site. The new Courts will probably cost about the same amount, wherever they are built; so the only question to be dealt with financially, is, what is likely to be the loss on the property already acquired? That this would be a formidable amount we do not believe. The land is very valuable, and useful for many purposes, and it would be greatly improved in value if a street were run from the Embankment by way of Essex-street, and through the land we have bought, to Lincoln's-inn-fields—which again could be brought into direct communication with Holborn by a very short additional street. This thoroughfare would be publicly useful, and whether it be made at present or no, some such plan must very shortly be adopted to secure that direct communication between Holborn, the Strand, and the river, which does not exist, and which is greatly needed. The question of cost, therefore, need not greatly alarm the most sensitive tax-payer.

The Embankment site contains two acres more land than its rival, which is ample space for all the accommodation that can possibly be required; with this advantage in the matter of space, there are the great and important considerations of light, air, and quiet. Nowhere overlooked; situated by the side of a great tidal river, affording continually a free current of air, and open to the greatest amount of light to be found in dingy London; the buildings might be made most suitable for all the purposes required. The light and air would be so plentiful that the innermost parts of the building would be cheerful and convenient; the space at the architects' disposal would admit of every court, of every room, of every lobby, being built of dimensions sufficient for any emergencies. For it must be remembered that we are to erect a building to stand for centuries, and we should be liberal in providing for the possibly increased requirements that the augmented trade and wealth of years may bring.

The superiority of the Thames site over Carey-street is, however, most overwhelming in the matter of approaches. The Embankment has free communications in every direction, and when the suggested, and necessary, continuation of Essex-street across Lincoln's-inn-fields, is carried out, can be reached from any portion of London with equal ease. The Strand is open on the one side, and the road on the Embankment on the other. The Embankment communicates direct with Westminster and the south-west in one direction, and through the new street from the Mansion House, with the City on the other. Visitors from the south side of London have only to cross Waterloo or Blackfriars Bridge to stand on the main thoroughfare. Steamers and the railway along the river, would bring passengers from all parts of the country to the gates of the Courts, and absolutely no extra traffic whatever need add to the burdens of Fleet-street and Chancery-lane.

A building erected on the Embankment would be surrounded by free air, would be seen on all sides, and would well and worthily complete the decoration and improvement of the river. In Carey-street we should be shut in on all sides, except the Strand. In the Em-

bankment we have a great opportunity; in Carey-street we have a compromise and a failure.

The whole question must be reconsidered in the House of Commons, when the money grant is asked for. It is to be hoped that, for once, a metropolitan improvement will be carefully and wisely discussed, and that the right course may be adopted.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOATED-SCHLOSS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

COUNT ALBRECHT VON RABENSBERG was the object of some attention in the winter of '44, when he appeared, for the first time, in the salons of Vienna. He was the head of an old Bohemian family; rich, not much past thirty, and handsome. He was, moreover, unmarried. Little was known about him, except that he had large estates, and more than one schloss, where he never resided; that his father had died when he was very young, and his only sister had been drowned, by accident, many years before; and that, left without kith or kin, since the age of eighteen, he had led a wandering life on the face of the globe, never remaining for many months in the same place. He consorted but little with men of his own age, he neither gambled nor drank, and he was said to be proof against all the attentions of women. Whether this was really so or not, such a reputation was, in itself, enough to pique curiosity and excite interest in Vienna, where feminine intrigue spreads its endless network among the roots of an aristocratic society. Add to this, the stern, sad expression of the young man's handsome face, and his reluctance ever to talk about himself, and the mystery with which it pleased the Viennese world to invest him, could no longer be a matter of surprise.

The world selected a very suitable wife for him—a lovely daughter of the princely house of L. He scandalously disappointed the world, and chose a wife for himself. He married a simple burgher's daughter; and the indignation which this outrage upon common decency aroused can only be conceived by those who know what the pride of "caste" in Vienna is. How could his infatuation be accounted for? The girl he fixed on was by no means beautiful. A sweet, pale face, a slender, graceful figure, were all young Magda had to boast of. He saw her first in one of the Lust-Gartens of the town, and from that moment his infatuation began. He followed her home; he never rested until he had made the good citizen's acquaintance; he called at the house daily during holy week, and on Easter Monday he asked Magda to become his wife. The girl was almost frightened. It was scarce a fortnight since she had first met the count's intense and searching gaze bent upon her; since she had been conscious of his following her and her mother home; scarce ten days since he first called, that cold March morning, when Magda's hands were red from the household washing, and she felt ashamed of them, as she knitted with downcast eyes, and replied in monosyllables to the questions of the deep-eyed, melancholy Graf. It had all passed like a dream, so fantastic and unreal it seemed. She was still a little afraid of him. He was very handsome and charming, no doubt; and no young maiden could be insensible to the devotion of such a knight; but his gravity and the difference of their rank a little oppressed her. She had scarcely accustomed herself to his daily visit, scarcely felt at ease in his presence, when he startled her by laying all he possessed at her feet. And with some trembling, some unaccountable misgiving at heart, she faltered "Yes."

The cackling this event caused throughout all classes (for high and low were equally interested therein) was increased by the haste with which the marriage was hurried on. Of course, it was said the poor young man had been entrapped into it; there were hints that he had been made drunk; there were even darker hints thrown out, without one shadow of foundation; but these lies had scarcely time to permeate society, when the news burst like a bomb into the midst of it that the ceremony had actually taken place in private, and that Count von Rabensberg and his bride had left Vienna.

The count's conduct was no less strange after marriage than it had been before. He worshipped his young wife with a passionate curiosity, so to speak, which seemed allied to some other mysterious feeling, deep-seated and unexplained. Now and again he would lie at her feet for hours, gazing into her eyes, as Hamlet may have done into Ophelia's, with a silent, half-sorrowful ecstasy, rising on a sudden, with a wild rapture, to cast his arms about her and cover her with kisses. By degrees she became used to his ways, more at ease under his long silences, less startled by his sudden passionate outbursts. There were times, too, when he would talk with an eloquence, the like of which she had never

heard, of all that he had seen or read, and tell strange tales of adventure with a charm which would have won the heart of a less willing listener. The sweet German nature, looking out of those calm blue eyes, grew daily closer to his; her happiness expanded daily, sending forth stronger shoots and tendrils, which clasped themselves around whatsoever belonged unto her "mann"—her Albrecht. His word would have been her law under any circumstances; it became a law of devotion, and not of discipline alone.

They spent three weeks on the Danube: they visited a large estate of the count's, near Pesth. Then, towards the end of the second month after their marriage, they moved to the old mansion of the Rabensbergs at Prague; worm-eaten, gloomy, uninhabited for years, with rust on its hinges, and grass-grown courts, and the sorrow of many generations hanging over it like a pall. The count was more pre-occupied, more strange in his demeanour than usual that night. After supper, when the servants had left the room, he said suddenly:

"We shall only be here two nights, Magda. To-morrow I must leave thee alone for the day. I go to Schloss Rabensberg, which is but a few hours' journey to prepare it for thy reception, my darling and then——"

He abruptly broke off: pressed her to his bosom, and struggled to cast aside the care which had weighed upon his spirits all the evening. The young wife was not very keen sighted; she soon forgot the shadow, in the sunshine, artificial though it was; and slept that night the calm sleep of a child, unconscious that her husband never closed his eyes, but lay and watched with a look of intense anxiety, the sweet untroubled face beside him.

He was off by daybreak; and Magda wandered about the house feeling a little lonely, and dreaming old-world dreams in the great desolate rooms, half the day. She drew a spinning-wheel from a dusty corner in one of the rooms, and set it near a window; bravely resolving to employ herself. It proved a failure; the thread broke every minute, and she pushed the wheel aside, at last, in despair. She could not sit down to her knitting to-day; she wanted something to employ her thoughts, and not her fingers only. She turned to the pictures; she examined them all in detail; they were mostly portraits, and among them was one which struck her young imagination forcibly; she came back to it again and again—why she could not tell. There were splendid-looking warriors, but it was not one of these; gay courtiers, and fair ladies in farthingale and ruff, but none of them possessed for her the attraction of a portrait representing a plain woman in the hideous dress in fashion fifty years since. The face was wholly unlike Albrecht's, unlike any one Magda remembered; unless indeed—but the fancy was absurd! Her own eyes, as the glass told her, were soft, light blue; these were grey, and anything but soft; passionate intensity was their characteristic, and the secret of their rivetting the spectator. Those eyes would not let themselves be forgotten; the only beautiful spot in the picture, it was natural she should think and speculate about them; but why should they seem to her like the broken, confused reflection of her own eyes, given back by the troubled waters of a steel-cold lake? There was neither name nor date affixed to the portrait, and no servant in the house knew who the original was. She returned to the room twice to look at it; and the memory of it haunted her long after the shades of twilight had gathered round; until the clatter of a horse's hoofs in the court-yard roused her to Albrecht's return.

He came in looking excited, but worn and anxious, and after embracing her tenderly, he almost immediately began thus:

"We leave this to-morrow morning, my dearest Magda. Art thou prepared to start?"

"Surely. We go to Schloss Rabensberg? I shall be glad to get out of this gloomy house, Albrecht."

"Schloss Rabensberg is still gloomier, Magda. It is surrounded by a moat, and stands in the midst of a wild forest. The walls are thick and the windows small. . . . It is not a cheerful residence, my poor child."

"Never mind. I shall get accustomed to it, Albrecht. It is the country—and we can walk about the woods all day long in the sweet summer time; and at night I shall not mind the gloom, with thee."

"Ah! that is it." He paused; and then continued with an effort, "Magda, I have to put thy love to a strange test. Art thou ready to undergo a separation from me, for awhile—for my sake?"

"What dost thou mean, Albrecht?"

"That for reasons I cannot explain, I earnestly wish thee to go to Schloss Rabensberg—but *alone*. Thy stay there unless, indeed, I am able to join thee, which

I pray to Heaven I may eventually do . . . will not be one of many days, probably; but while it lasts, we shall not meet."

"Oh, Albrecht!" she began; but she saw that in his face which stopped her; a look of such intense, suffering anxiety for her reply, that the words of entreaty died on her lips. He went on.

"Perhaps I have no right to ask this of thee, my darling. It is early days to demand such a sacrifice—but if thou knewest —if"

She laid her little pale face on his shoulder. "Only tell me what good my going can do?"

"I cannot I can only say this. There is a fatal spell over my poor old house, which I believe thou—and thou alone in the world, Magda, canst remove."

She opened her blue eyes wide. What could he mean? Did he take her for a child? But no; his tone was too serious for jesting. Some of Hoffman's wild tales recurred to her. Was the place haunted? To her German imagination, brought up to regard the relations of the positive with the spiritual world as close and constant, nothing seemed impossible. But what could he mean by saying that *she* alone could remove the fatal spell.

He felt the little heart palpitate against his; and he continued at length in a sorrowful voice,

"No, my Magda, I see the ordeal is too severe. . . . We will turn our faces the other way, and go far from hence, and begin a new life with another people . . . and try to forget Schloss Rabensberg!" he added bitterly.

She raised her head.

"No, I will do it, Albrecht. . . . Forgive me, and try and forget my folly . . . it is past now. I will do whatever thou biddest me, du allerliebster Albrecht!"

She flung her arms about him; and he, in return, expressed his gratitude in the most impassioned language. All that need be recorded here were these words:

"I shall be near thee, mein schatz, very near, and thou shalt know daily tidings of me in some sort, though we may not meet. . . . Neither may Lottchen accompany thee; but thou wilt find four old and faithful servants in the schloss, one of whom will undertake Lottchen's duties. For the rest, my Magda, all the counsel I will give thee is never to let the pure and holy thoughts which are thy constant companions give place to superstitious terrors, at Schloss Rabensberg. Such thoughts are mighty angels to drive out all idle fear. Be simple, unsuspicious of evil; trustful of the good God; be thyself in short—and all will be well with thee!"

The night passed; and soon after breakfast the next morning, they set off on their strange and melancholy journey, unaccompanied by any servant. As Magda descended the steps of the gloomy old mansion which had seemed to her as little better than a prison the day before, she felt almost a pang of regret; for here, at least, she and Albrecht had been together, and here no mystery had reigned. Those lonely hours —the picture which had so fascinated her, all was now forgotten; her mind was absorbed by one subject alone.

At the end of half a day's journey they came to a rugged upland country. Here were ravines down which the thread of some now shrivelled mountain stream forced its way through grey slags, and the prone stems of blasted firs. Here, too, were swampy hollows, rank with overgrowth of poisonous vegetation, and rising out of them, anon, great strips of slaty rock, tumbled about, as by a giant's hand, and crowned with the dislocated trunks of trees. It was clear that the storms here every winter were very violent, and the hand of man did nothing to repair the injuries of nature. A more desolate district it was impossible to find in the kingdom of Bohemia. And it formed an appropriate prelude to the black, silent forest, in the centre of which stood Schloss Rabensberg. Here was no song of bird, nor sound of water; nothing but the utter stillness of moveless boughs, in the hot summer evening. The road shot like an arrow through the pines, whose tall red stems, in a serried mass, rose to an intolerable height, before they stretched forth their sinuous arms, clasping their hard dark fingers so closely as almost to shut out the blue face of heaven. Now and again there was a cross-road, or narrow path losing itself speedily in the red blackness of the pine-trunks; and still the main road swerved not, but bore on for upwards of an hour, without break or point of light on the horizon.

They had sat silent for a long time, their hands in each other's; their faces, the one anxious and excited, the other, repressing by an heroic effort any symptom of nervousness; when Albrecht jumped up, and called to the postilion to stop. Magda, leaning forward, saw that the wood was at last breaking; what seemed to be an open space lay some few hundred yards before them.

Albrecht stooped, and drew out a box from under the seat of the carriage. He then unlocked and took from it, to Magda's infinite surprise, a queer little hat, and still queerer little garment, the like of which Magda had never seen, but which she subsequently learnt had been called in former days, "a spencer." Moreover, there was a short and narrow skirt of silk, having an absurd little flounce round the bottom, such as Magda believed her mother to have worn years ago. She asked, with a smile of wonder, what all this meant.

"Thou dear heart!" cried Albrecht, embracing her, "it means that here we must part, and that I beg, as a further favour to me, that thou wilt exchange thy pretty hat and mantle for these faded old-fashioned ones: nay, if it be possible, thy skirt also. Do not ask any questions. It is a fancy of mine—an absurd fancy, that in the old house where all belongs to another date, another generation, thou shouldst not seem to flout the poor old servants and the pictures on the wall, with thy new fangled clothes. . . . And now farewell, my beloved one! . . . God keep thee! Be of good courage, and Heaven will reward thy going!"

With that, he kissed her with an energy akin to desperation, and leaped from the carriage. The tears forced themselves into her blue eyes, though she tried to smile as she tied on the little old hat, and slipped on the spencer. The carriage was then rolling on, and she blew him kisses, and sent him April smiles through her tears, as long as he was in sight. Then when the carriage turned sharply to the left, and she could no longer see him, the sun went in, and the shower was heavy. The poor child felt that she was now, indeed, alone. A moment afterwards the carriage drew up on the edge of a small square lake, in the centre of which, without an inch of earth to spare on any side, rose an equally square grey stone building with a high red-tiled roof, and innumerable towers, turrets, and pinnacles, breaking the sky line. Through the moat—for such the lake was termed—a stream flowed constantly, born among the hills, and growing in its passage through the forest, till it had been widened and deepened by the hand of man into this broad basin, and was then suffered to escape, a dwindled rivulet, and hide itself in the forest once again. Looking down from the windows of the schloss, one saw to the very bottom of the dark green water, where long weeds and grasses, like dusky plumes, swayed to and fro with the current, and the great brown shadow of a fish darted, ever and anon, athwart the mystery of tangled rushes; and carrying the eye on towards the bank, one caught moreover a confused outline of crawling animal life, wherewith the black ooze teemed. It was like looking down into a human heart (if such a thing could be), and watching its network of multifarious miseries and desires, drifted by the secret currents of passion—the swift thought darting across it—the crawling meanness lurking in the impurity of its muddy places.

A long-disused portcullis showed that that there had once been a drawbridge: but a narrow one, for foot-passengers only, had supplanted it, some time in the preceding century, and had already acquired a respectable air of antiquity.

Two old men, in liveries of a strangely old-fashioned make, were standing on the bridge. They were evidently waiting for Magda, and as the calèche drew up, they let down the steps, and handed her out. The postilion had received his orders, no doubt, beforehand. The grey-headed men had no sooner lightened the carriage of its human freight, and cut the cord of the valises that hung behind, than, without a word, he turned his horses' heads, and drove off into the forest by the way he had come. To poor Magda, it seemed as if the last link that held her to the dear outer world—that held her to her Albrecht, was now severed. She looked up at the stern unfriendly building and down at its black shadow in the moat, and she shuddered as she passed under the iron teeth of its portcullis, and heard the gate locked behind her. She found herself in a low stone hall, the groined roof of which rested on arches. At the further end was a winding stair, which led to the dwelling-rooms.

A woman, past middle-age, stood expectant in the middle of the hall, and came forward to kiss Magda's hand, after the old German custom, as her new mistress entered. But though there was no want of alacrity shown in rendering this conventional act of respect—as there was no want of alacrity, indeed, in anything the woman did—nothing of pleasure was evinced. One might have thought that the greeting a pretty young creature to that grim old place, tenanted hitherto only by grim old servants, might have brought some spark of cordiality into their eyes—which foreign servants are not afraid to let light up their faces. But it was not so here. The old

men looked grave—grave and rather sad, it seemed to Magda. The woman looked stern, keen, and resolute. In spite of her years, she was evidently still strong, and unusually active. Her eye was quick and bright; her walk, and all her movements, betokened decision and promptitude. She was dressed in black stuff, and her grey hair was put back under a black cap; no speck of white relieved the general mournfulness of her aspect.

Magda tried to smile, and say something gracious to the old woman. She was perfectly respectful in her reply, but as hard as nails; the swift eye was raised, and the tight-shut lips unclosed, just so much as was absolutely necessary, no more; then she pounced upon shawls and cloaks as an eagle might swoop upon his prey, and led Magda up-stairs, without further ado, the two old men following with the valises. The geography of the schloss was less intricate than that of most old buildings. At the top of the stairs ran a long passage, which turned and twisted, it is true, and from which sundry other flights of stairs debouched, to the bewilderment of a stranger who was not closely observant. But at the end of this passage was a door, which the woman unlocked from a bunch of keys hanging at her side; and after this all was simple enough. A short flight of steps led into one of the many towers which Magda had seen from the bridge. This tower —that portion of it, at least, into which Magda was now taken — contained two good-sized rooms, one over the other, a winding stair communicating. The lower room was oak panelled, and in it were an old piano, a harp, a few direfully bad prints of the House of Hapsburg, in the beginning of this century, and one of the Retreat from Moscow. Klopstock's Messiah and an odd volume or two of Lessing were upon one table, together with a very faded work-basket, and an old Spa-box, with the Allée des Soupirs (in which the trees looked like tufts of blue-green feathers upon hairpins), much defaced by time, upon its lid. Upon the other table a cloth, with preparations for supper, was laid. It was the only thing in that strange room, where all seemed to have remained forgotten and untouched for the last twenty years, that spoke a living language—the same, unchanged by fashion, wherein our fathers made ready to eat. A substantial pie, some slices of raw ham, and a carp from the moat stewed in red wine, would, from all time, have seemed an excellent German supper. But Magda felt in no wise disposed to do it justice. She asked to see her bedroom, and the old woman led her up-stairs to the corresponding chamber above, the only difference in the shape of the two being that this latter had a wide oriel window overhanging the moat—an excrescence supported by a corbel, like the "Parson's Window" at Nuremberg.

The room was hung with old Flemish tapestry; a quaint stove of green delf towered up in one corner, a dressing-table and tarnished mirror in another. The bed, which was like a black box with the lid turned back, disclosing a yellow eider-down quilt, discouraged, rather than invited, the weary to lie down and take their rest. It was raised on a single step, a daïs, and stood at right-angles between the door and window. The back, which I have compared to the lid of the box, was of solid black oak, carved with grotesque figures; there were curtains at the head, and none at the feet; but a board rose up, like the stone at the foot of a grave, with the date "1600" carved thereon. Upon a nail at the head of the bed hung a crown of immortelles, and the name "Louise," fashioned out of the same flowers, after the German manner. The flowers were brown with age, and many of them had dropped; similar chaplets, blown and beaten with the rain and wind, Magda had seen on every headstone in the graveyard where her mother lay.

"Whose name is that? Who was Louise?" she asked of a second old woman, less active than the first, who now appeared, proffering her services as kammerjungfer, while the other left the room.

"It was the gracious young lady," replied the old servant, dropping her voice till it ended in a low sigh. Magda felt more drawn towards her by that touch of feminine softness, less afraid to question her than her falcon-eyed predecessor.

"And when did she die?" continued Magda.

"Twenty-one years ago," whispered the old woman, glancing round. "But, may it please the gracious lady, it is forbidden to speak on the subject."

"Why?" said Magda, grown almost bold by her curiosity, and by her confidence in the kindly wrinkled face before her. "Who forbids you?"

"It is forbidden," she repeated. "The gracious lady does not know . . ." She glanced round once more, and shook her

head—a more effective close to her sentence than any spoken words.

"What is your name?" asked Magda, after a pause, during which her heart seemed to stand still. "And whereabouts do you sleep? Is it anywhere near me?"

"My name is Bettine. . . . I sleep a long way off, in another tower. But Hanne sleeps close at hand to the gracious lady. She is the head. All the gracious lady's orders must be given to her. I am but the second. . . . I was kammermädchen to the Fräulein Louise, and so I have remained here."

Magda went to the window and looked out. Twilight was slowly creeping up over the black wood in front of her; the frogs were croaking on the edges of the moat below; there was no song of birds, no brisk barking of dogs, or lowing of cattle; no cheerful sound of other living thing. The stillness, broken only by that horrible hoarse music, was almost unbearable. She said to her attendant:

"Is it always like this? Is there never any noise? Does no one ever come here?"

Bettine shook her head for all reply.

Then Magda descended the turret again slowly, and returned to the parlour. One of the white-haired men was waiting to serve her at supper, and so she sat down, and made a semblance of eating. When this ceremony had been gone through, the night was fast closing in; the shadows deepened in the corners of the old room; a purple bar widened and spread over the gold floor of Heaven. Perhaps it was then that the young Gräfin felt her loneliness to the full for the first time. She opened the old piano; she passed her fingers over the loose, yellow notes of the hand-board. What dreamy old waltzes it had known in times when that dance was not the mad whirl it has now become, but a slow, swimming measure! What Ländlers and wild Bohemian tunes, which had now passed away into the realm of things forgotten! No doubt the hands that once loved to wander over those notes were long since still. Had it the gift of speech, how much that old piano could tell her!

She turned to the table, and opened one of the books.

LOUISE VON RABENSBERG,
1822,
Andenken ihrer geliebten mutter,

was written in faded ink. Who was this Louise, of whom everything here seemed to speak? No doubt, that elder sister of Albrecht's whom he had never named, but of whom Magda had heard as having been drowned twenty years ago. Why was Bettine forbidden to speak of her? What was the mystery concerning this dead daughter of the house of Rabensberg? And was it connected in any way with that "fatal spell" Albrecht had spoken of? His words had been incomprehensible to her at the time; she racked her brain in trying now to determine what definite construction they would bear; and, above all, in trying to find an answer to that question of far closer personal interest, What was the meaning of her being sent here? How could it be given to the humble burgher's daughter to remove any mysterious shadow that hung over the proud old family?

She had once read that to the pure and holy in heart the spiritual world has no terrors; that the weapons of the powers of darkness fall harmless before the innocence of a little child. Could it be that because Albrecht had called her "good," because he believed her to be thus pure and spotless at heart, that he had sent her here to drive out by her presence the dark spirit that hovered over his house?

Alas! alas! if so, she much feared the test would fail. How many sins did not her conscience reproach her with! How often had she been slothful over the house work at home, and negligent of the washing! How much more had she thought of looking neat and pretty when she went to mass, than of the holy service! How reluctant to confess these very sins to Father Paulus, when she had found herself behind the grating in the Ludwig's Kirche! Alas! if it depended on an immaculate conscience! . .

A clock in one of the towers struck nine. The servants brought in, with much pomp and ceremony, two massive silver candlesticks, which they lighted, and then departed. The gloom was only more oppressive than before; an island of pale yellow light was diffused just round the candles, and an impenetrable darkness swallowed up the rest of the room. Magda shivered, and went to the window. The moon had risen, and was pouring a flood of silver upon the little bridge, and the trembling reeds and sedges on the bank, and driving back reflections, like knives, into the heart of the steel-blue moat, and waking into a mystery of splendour the crests and shafts

of the fir forest yonder. It was a pleasanter scene than that ghostly parlour, and Magda felt an irrepressible longing to go forth into the moonlight; to stand, but for five minutes, on that bridge under the clear vault of Heaven, to be so much nearer to Albrecht for a little space, before going to her bed—for in this room she felt it would make her too nervous to sit up any longer. She touched a hand-bell, and Hanne entered.

"Can I" . . . faltered the young Gräfin, annoyed to find her summons thus answered. . . . "Can I step out upon the bridge for a few minutes? Can the castle-gate be unlocked?"

For a second it seemed as if Hanne hesitated.

"The gracious lady's commands shall be obeyed."

She left the room, and a minute or two afterwards Bettine brought in the queer old hat and spencer.

"I want nothing," she said; but she threw the spencer over her arm; "it is so warm. Come with me, Bettine;" and, passing through the unlocked door of the tower, they traversed the long passage, and descended to the hall. The gate had been unbarred by the old servants, who stood one on each side of it, rigidly erect, as their young mistress passed out.

It was as though a great weight were lifted from her head when she felt the warm night wind blow upon her face, and the myriad stars of Heaven above her, instead of the low-beamed roof and worm-eaten panels of that oppressive room. She stood, flooded in moonlight, upon the bridge, and, leaning over the parapet, looked down at the stars in the water, and up at the schloss, on which the moon fell slantways. She could examine its exterior now more leisurely. There was her tower, with its low parlour window below, and the wide-mouthed oriel above, casting a sharp projection of black shade upon the building. Her eye wandered over the many other windows of the schloss, no two of the same size, or at the same level, but set irregularly over the face of the building at uncertain intervals.

One of them, and one alone, stood open; and even now, as Magda looked, a strange thing came to pass.

The fancy seized her that she caught sight of a white face at this window, staring down at her with eyes that glittered in the moonlight.

It was a delusion, no doubt. There was a thin white curtain at this window, which the night breeze fluttered now and again. And, more than this, Hanne's hard grey-haired head appeared, unmistakeable in the clear moonlight, a moment later. To either of these causes it was possible to refer the strange impression produced on Magda; and then the excited state of her nerves rendered her singularly susceptible to such a fancy as this.

While she argued thus with herself, the spencer, which had been gradually slipping from her arm, fell on the parapet, its black arms flying in the breeze, and dropped into the water with a heavy splash. Bettine gave a little cry, but it was echoed by one louder and shriller, and this certainly came from the open window.

"What was that?" said Magda, startled.

Bettine made as though she heard not, but began calling lustily to one of the men to bring a boat-hook, and fish up the gracious lady's mantle.

"Did you not hear a very peculiar sharp cry?" asked Magda, again. "Who could it be?—not Hanne?"

"Yes, begging the Frau Gräfin's pardon—that is the Hanne's room . . . no doubt it was the Hanne's voice . . . it is somewhat shrill, by times."

The face was turned away, and it seemed to Magda that she spoke with a certain hesitation; but these were her words, and she added nothing to them, busying herself thenceforward with the recovery of the garment, which had been carried by the current half way round the moat. Magda felt by no means satisfied or reassured. There, at the window, was the stern grey face of Hanne, watching her, she knew; it seemed difficult to believe that so self-contained a woman should have yielded to the weakness of screaming! The young gräfin turned away with a shudder, she scarce knew why, and walked slowly to the further end of the bridge. And here her eye was attracted by something white on the furthest stone of the parapet, upon which the moonlight fell. She stooped; it was a piece of paper, on which some pebbles had been placed, to prevent the wind's carrying it away. She took it up, and read easily, in the clear moonlight, these words:

"Be of good courage, for my sake. Remember, I am near you. "A."

There came a rush of blood to the poor chilled heart; it was as though new life

were infused into her veins. She pressed the paper to her lips, and murmured:

"Du lieber Himmel! . . . 'For his sake,' whate'er betide, I will not flinch from it."

THE PARIS FISH MARKETS.

Among the benefits that inland towns derive from railways, not the least striking is the regular supply of fresh sea-fish from the coasts; and such cities as Vienna, Berlin, and Paris, may thank the Iron Horse for many a dainty dish. By means of diligences and mail-coaches Paris could draw but a limited supply of sea-fish even from the nearest ports on the Normandy coast; and it was only when the temperature was exceptionably favourable that any could be sent up to the capital from the Mediterranean and western shores. Yet, notwithstanding the difficulties arising from the state of the weather and the mode of transport, the Paris markets had for many years been regularly supplied with sea-fish from the northern coast by means of a system of cartage, comprising no less than three thousand two hundred and ninety-two carts, and organised by the fishing interest; and also to some extent from the vicinity of Havre and the Calvados coast. The diligences, at that time, also occasionally brought up fish from the Mediterranean ports; and during the year 1836, the total supply that reached the capital by these different modes of conveyance was three million three hundred and sixty-one thousand kilogrammes, or about three thousand three hundred and sixty tons. The quantity which now reaches Paris every year is about three times as large, yet prices instead of falling, as one would naturally suppose, have maintained themselves, owing probably to the immense increase of inland territory to be supplied by the fisheries, and to the latter having unfortunately failed to develop themselves in the same proportions as the consumption.

The arrival at the Paris Halles Centrales of the great caravan of railway trucks, bearing the produce of the nets and dredges of the whole littoral of France, is the signal for the commencement of a busy and curious scene. The bustle commences about six in the morning, when that portion of those gigantic glass and iron buildings which is devoted to the sale of fish, is invaded by a crowd of industrious blue blouses, with here and there a cocked hat, before which dreaded emblem of authority the skulking "voyous" and homeless wretches quickly abandon their hiding places, and disperse once more through the purlieus of the city, or remain hanging about the gates on the look out for a job. The waggons are quickly unloaded, and as the different lots are handed across the pavement expectation is rife, to see what prospect there may be of a good day's market; for, although the improved means of transport are of immense benefit to all concerned in this line of business, "first catch your hare" is still the rule, and the market is as dependent as ever upon the fishermen and the sea. The baskets, each of which bears the owner's name and the address of his salesman, are, immediately on delivery, deposited on their proper heaps by the porters, so that the salesman, by the aid of the way bills, which are handed in by the carman, can at once note the magnitude of the consignment for which he has become responsible. The sales are carried on by public auction; and the different lots are disposed of with the greatest celerity. To be first in the field is of course a great consideration, for only a limited quantity of goods can be offered for sale at a time; and fish, unlike most other articles, diminishes in value as the hour of the day advances. To avoid prejudice to the seller's interests, the dealers had long agreed to put up for sale, lots composed of parcels taken from every van in attendance. In this way one would have thought that the advantages or losses attendant upon late or early sale would be effectually equalised. But the commercial spirit is an ingenious thing. To obtain the full benefit of this arrangement some of the sellers, instead of allowing their fish to be forwarded from the station in the large railway trucks, brought it down to the market in several small carts, so that each vehicle might occupy a place in the rank, and furnish its quota to every sale as if it belonged to a separate owner. This little manœuvre was known as "le coupage," and to such an extent did the abuse spread that a police regulation was issued quite recently, decreeing that priority of arrival should be established as the title to priority of sale. In 1859, eleven thousand four hundred and seventy tons of fish were brought to the Halles in sixteen thousand and forty-two carts; in 1863, fourteen thousand four hundred and thirty tons occupied fifty-two thousand two hundred and eighty carts; and in 1866, thirteen thousand nine hundred and forty-three tons were brought on no less than seventy-eight thousand six hundred and four vehicles—under four hundredweight to each.

As soon as the fish is unpacked it is placed on large flat baskets, and is laid out in the various divisions, in the outskirts of the market, appropriated to the different salesmen. This work is done by the "verseurs," and requires a considerable amount of skill, for not only must the different species be grouped together, but the lots must be as nearly as possible of the same size, and the fish presented to the eye in its most favourable aspect, without, however, any attempt being made to conceal any flaw. The "verseurs" pass the fish to the criers, who are thirty-four in number, and whose duty it is to announce the goods as they are brought up for sale, to receive the bids, and to report the names of the purchasers to the auctioneer's clerk. Notwithstanding the uproar, the shouts, and the highly-spiced chaff which everywhere seems to be necessary to the proper disposal of fish, everything proceeds in the most perfect order, and the baskets appear and disappear with the greatest rapidity. Whenever any extraordinary specimen comes to hand, such as a gigantic salmon, or a

sturgeon of inordinate growth, men are sent round the building to announce the event at the highest pitch of their voices. This brings together the fishmongers and the "marchands de primeurs," whose hobby it is to display an occasional marvel on their marble slabs; and the competition is often as warm and prolonged as when an "old master" falls under the hammer at the Hotel Drouot, in the presence of the representatives of almost every picture-gallery in Europe.

The authorities are much more strict in Paris in seizing all sorts of damaged provisions than we are in England; and indeed the Frenchman, when he becomes an official, takes a characteristic delight in carrying out his instructions to the letter. He is most punctilious where he can be most tormenting, and a market inspector is as zealous in seizing bad fish as a sergent de ville is in locking up beggars and vagabonds.

The fresh-water fish are sold under the same roof, those from the Port St. Paul being preserved alive. The fish are conveyed to market in large wooden tanks full of water, and on their arrival are transferred to stone troughs, where a current is kept up, which speedily refreshes them, and renders them brisk and lively.

In 1867, eighteen thousand two hundred and eighty-three tons of salt fish and sixteen hundred and twenty-six tons of fresh fetched, the one sixteen millions four hundred and forty-one thousand francs, and the other one million nine hundred and twenty-five thousand nine hundred francs. Of these supplies, three thousand six hundred and thirteen tons of sea and one thousand and ten tons of fresh-water fish came from abroad. A great proportion of the latter came from Holland, Prussia, Switzerland, and Italy; while Belgium and England supplied most of the former. More than fifty-two per cent of the mussels eaten in Paris come from Belgium.

Pavillon number nine, the section of the Halles Centrales devoted to fish, has become much too confined for the requirements of the trade; and as soon as the fine pile of sheds in course of construction, is completed, a much larger space will be at the disposal of the fish department. The fresh-water fish and the oysters will then occupy the space at present allotted to poultry and game. Oysters, somehow, do not sell well at the Halles, where they have only been installed since the suppression of their old market in the rue Montorgeuil. The oyster trade is a distinct business; it has its own customs and traditions, and refuses to depart from them in spite of the reforming efforts of the authorities. The oyster fishery, according to the French law, commences on the first of September and closes at the end of April. Before sailing for the banks, the dredgers fix the price at which the oysters are to be delivered with the agents of the Paris salesman, and the contract is binding during the whole season, whether the take be great or small. Whether these again fix the price with the large consumers we are unaware, but the chief restaurateurs of Paris have their annual meeting, at which they in their turn fix the price at which oysters are to figure on the "carte" for the next twelve months. The price paid by the salesmen, as is shown by the following statistics, increases every year. In 1840, the thousand was worth twelve francs; in 1850, sixteen and a half francs; in 1860, twenty-six francs; and in 1867 as much as forty francs. The dearth of oysters on the banks is not the sole cause of this increase in value. Here, again, the railways have produced a revolution, and London and Paris find competitors in Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Moscow for the Essex natives, and the green oysters of Arcachon. Last year Paris consumed as many as twenty-six million seven hundred and fifty thousand seven hundred and fifty-five oysters, of which the greater portion came from Courseulles and Saint Waast. The celebrated Ostend oysters, or rather the Essex natives barrelled there, only reached the figure of nine hundred and thirteen thousand, and those from Marennes merely four thousand two hundred and fifty, owing to the great scarcity.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XIV.—*Continued.*

MIDNIGHT.—Surely there must be demons in the air. And yet I return here quite calm, in no fury. *They* drove me to it. I felt them holding my hand, forcing it to my pocket. After twenty had gone, not she opposite—no, nor all the clergy and bishops in the world, with their smooth platitudes—would have stopped me. Oh! don't let me think of it! Don't—don't! Let me go out—go anywhere! Oh, Heaven! Sixty—sixty pieces gone! Was I mad? Did I know what I was doing?

O for this monster, that enters into the soul of a man, and makes him forget all, every restraint in the sense of this succession of defeats! Here is the *devilish*, the demoniac part of the whole—the perversity with which defeat clings to you, do what you will. Was it not an artful, cruel, and monstrous device of the arch enemy to have selected that precise moment when I had begun, to make this turn against me? O Heaven! to think that I should be sitting with only a few scraps of silver in my pocket, and sixty golden pieces flung away in this blind, wicked, sinful fashion—sixty precious pieces, that I might have sent home! O vile, miserable, weak, abandoned, contemptible wretch, where are your prayers, your complacent superiority and scruples! And O, greatest villany of all, that I should not be dwelling on the piece of news now before me, in her gentle, trembling writing!

"I have sad news for you, dearest, which

I have been concealing, in the hope that it might turn to better. Our little Dora has been ill, oh, so cruelly ill! I thought she would have been taken from us. But God is so good: I believe chiefly because you are good and self-denying, and He would not afflict you. But she is out of danger, and will be well soon. I must tell you all we had to do to save her. The doctor here said we must get Baxter, our doctor, from Birmingham, as he would not be answerable; and the two visits and consultations came to near fifty pounds. And, O dearest, I was obliged to take up that money we had kept for the rent. So, what we are to do I know not. But where the life of our darling is at stake, I would beg and go to jail, and do anything. Besides, I know you are so clever, and can make such friends, you will find money somehow. But God will bless you for your self-denial in the midst of sin. You have walked through the fire, like the great Three of scripture, and have not been harmed. I am indeed proud of you! That will stand you in grace and salvation——"

Yes, that is all very fine. "God bless my self-denial!" How easy it is to bring in these fine pious words; it becomes almost a conventional shape of cant. She is good and well brought up, and all that; but I would like to see the most pious of them all exposed as I have been, so cruelly, miserably, and vilely tried. Why their faith and piety would all parch up like a bit of paper before the fire. It is easy to preach far away in a dull, god-speed village, where you are not *worth* being tempted. I'd like to hear our smooth Bulmer and our smug bishop, with his oily phrases. O it is easy for them!

For this is all the regular jargon which she has picked up from——. The poorest creature among us is able to preach and advise, and point out the right way; and there is no such agreeable pastime or one that so ministers to the vanity of wretched human nature. A broken down jail bird, in jail, will find a satisfaction in giving *his* advice and experience. Above all, what a satisfaction in being able to say "*I* told you so!" "*I* warned you!" "I foresaw all this!" I believe that to be the most exquisite morsel for the envious crew; and it means at the bottom, "and I am *delighted* that I was proved to be right!" They would not sacrifice the triumph of *that*, to save you.

O, what platitudes I am talking! what useless rubbish I am picking up! what use can it be to me now? And I do not mean this, Heaven knows, to *her*—no, no, no, a thousand times no. She that did so much for me, that stood by me, at that critical time, when every influence was brought to bear—relations, friends. That I should have breathed a thought, a word, against my sweet divinity! O, "angels are painted fair to look like you!" But can a tried, harassed, persecuted man like me be held accountable for every fretful thought? I have not yet finished her dear letter, it shall soothe me.

"You may call me anything you please, invent any names for me. O, I shall expect one of the 'Blue letters,' as I call them. I know the next will bring me good news, good news that you are starting. And O, I do grieve that I am obliged to tell you anything that will distress you; but what can I do? Mr. Bernard says, 'He will rush to the tables now, and sacrifice his principles to get this money for you, if *he has not done so* already, and lost heavily.' At this I could not help making him an indignant speech, that I knew you too well. In fact I said you would *die* sooner than move a hair's breadth towards what you believe to be wrong. And that is my firm belief, dearest. He only laughed, and said good-humouredly 'we would see.' After all he means well. Later came in Mr. Bulmer, the clergyman, who asked a great deal about you; and said he would give anything if you were home again out of that fearful place. No one knew the danger of it. Then I did a wrong thing I know, for which you will be angry with me; but I could not resist taking out your diary and reading him *a little* extract, especially your magnificent denunciation of the horrors of that gambling. I read as well as I could, and I could see that he was a little jealous. I know he did not like you at that time, and he was on the side of my relations, and he showed his old feeling by saying that it was all very fine, very elegant, no doubt; but that the instant you returned he would put a simple question to you, 'Had you ever put down a sixpence?'"

What folly, how childish! *always* making me ridiculous, hawking me about in this way! These women's tongues know no discretion, babbling and chattering to everyone. What business has he with *me*. He'll put his question, will he? What answer will he get, does he fancy? "My good and reverend sir, pray attend to your own concerns. What was the instance of that horse which you sold to Mr. ——? Was *that* a bit of sharp practice or not?" A fine pass I am reduced to—everybody thinks they can lecture me. What right has

he or any other, call him Bernard, or any name? *Suppose I did put down some money*, it is my own concern, and that of my own *too scrupulous* conscience. Suppose I did lose even. That is *my* business—distinctly mine, and no one else's. I shall have to bear the consequences. O, Heaven, *there* it is—consequences! I must begin again.

I can think of this no more. O my lost gold, my precious money, that those robbers have stripped me of! The vile, scheming miscreants, that fatten and thrive on the poor. O what shall I do—what is to become of me! And what stupid folly to abandon my only safeguard, the system I was preaching of to others! What madness! If I had only stopped when I had begun to lose, and then waited for a new opening. But they shall give it to me all back, every coin of it, and with interest!

CHAPTER XV.

THURSDAY.—I never slept till four this morning. I had the hum of that cursed wheel in my ears. Was there ever man so cruelly persecuted, or made to fight the battle of life so pitilessly? I come here for a little holiday, which I have not had for years, and to pick up some wretched scraps of health; and when I succeed a little, I find my house struck with affliction, and all my means melting away. That child—and Dora's piteous, foolish letter! But what do I say—*she* is left to me. Wicked tongue that should be cropped out! Am I not ungrateful, brutishly ungrateful, when she remains to me! After all, I have something to be thankful for, deeply thankful for. And a few napoleons loss is not such a crime. Wiser and holier men have lost thousands. No, it is not that. "Cursed!" Oh, what words it has taught me! Well, accursed—there! that is more decent. It is very fine for a sick, worried, badgered soul to be picking his words. I leave that to the complacently virtuous at home, who have nothing to trouble them, and are never tried, and can pray smoothly on a soft hassock. I should like to see these smug pharisees with bills pouring in, they going home without a farthing to meet the bills, and a small bag with a hundred pounds in gold, forgotten by some one on the railway cushion beside them. Not *notes* which can be stopped or identified. *There is* the test to put these holy men to. Try a starving curate with it, and insure him against detection.

Another letter lying on the table which I had passed over. Why do they persecute me in this way with their long screeds! Yet I know the hand—Maxwell's—yes. What does he say? More of his underhand work—his stabbing in the dark; but I warn them to take care, for there is a point when the baited soul will turn.

"SIR,—The directors of this bank have learned with surprise that a responsible officer of theirs, entrusted with a serious mission, has become actually notorious for his assiduous attendance at the gambling tables of the place you are now in. When there is considered the extraordinary delay in remitting the large sum of money which was to have been lodged at this bank to Mr. Bernard's credit, very grave and serious suspicions arise as to your behaviour. I am instructed therefore to request you will cease to bring any fresh scandals on the untarnished name of the house, and at once return. The stories that have reached them, would almost justify them in immediate dismissal; but they forbear further action, until it be seen whether you can offer any explanation."

Return! But whither am I to turn for money? Sixty pounds! why it will be to return home and face bailiffs. He told me last time he could give me no more time, and that, on another occasion, I must be punctual. I could no more make out sixty pounds than I could fly. I had better go home at once and face them all. It will be over the sooner. As for any good I have gained by coming to this place, it is all gone now by this worry and affliction. My nerves seem all gone, and my heart last night was almost leaping up every moment I could lie down. God help us all. At any rate, I will get out of this place.

Four o'clock.—I just met Grainger coming out of the room, his hand full of gold. He was exulting an instant, was about making me say to him, "Where is your resolution, your promise?" when I checked myself. What right had I—and indeed, I felt that all this was delusion and I had no right to set up as a preacher.

"Don't blow me up," he said gently, "I *can't* help it. I have tried and tried. Besides you know, *you* yourself. By the way, D'Eyncourt says he saw you lose fifty louis last night."

"Where is he?" I said, fiercely; "bring me to him, and I will teach him to invent falsehoods about me."

"Well, you lost something, didn't you? But don't be cast down. I am very sorry for you, very; and I tell you what, here are six naps, all I can afford, and go back and try again."

I turned away with horror. "Never," I

said, "I have sunk low enough, God knows; I have done with it and with this place, and if I could only get away home at once, this moment—oh that I had never come!"

He looked at me gravely, then gently took my arm and led me out. "Now my good friend," he said, "forgive me if I speak freely to you. You make too much of this. What is it after all? A few napoleons! Did you never drop money in the street, or have your purse taken out of your pocket? We get over that soon enough. 'It can't be helped,' 'must be endured,' and all that. But a few pieces lost here seems a calamity, like a house burnt down, or a murder. Now you are so sensible and rational and all that, I am sure you will look at it in this way——"

"It is not that," I say, "but——"

"Well, I am glad of it. What is it then—bad news from home? What *she?* Dora ill?"

Dora! A curious light, and more curious expectancy was in his eyes. I could pass over his speaking of her as "Dora," for I knew he was not conscious of what he was saying. And, indeed, we might have some indulgence. I told him what was the real state of the case. He has a fair heart, and he showed sympathy.

"Well, you have had your share of trials," he said, "but as for this little loss at the tables, you must see how little it enters into the matter. How would you bear with me if I gave you a piece of advice? I know those tables well—they take freaks at times, and then they destroy us all. But in the average state of things, something *is* to be done with them. You fail once, but you can try again."

"Never," I said. "Never, indeed!"

"Well, you are foolish, I tell you. You have lost so much—take these three naps; if you lose them, it will add very little to your other loss; while these very three might actually win you back your own money. Ay, not only that, but ten times as much."

"Ah, if I had only my own back I should be happy, and ask nothing else."

"Why there are numbers of instances. There was that Jenkinson, that went in with a florin, which I declare solemnly within a quarter of an hour had mounted to a thousand francs. Why there was Lord A., whose one napoleon I saw, myself, grow into ten fat rouleaux as large as sausages. It is not all ill-luck recollect. Some one told me what Whately the archbishop said about 'a rashly cautious man.' There is often as much folly in over caution as in recklessness. Here, then—you are so proud, you will be under no compliment—give me one louis, and I'll go in and play for you. I feel a conviction I can do something."

But he could not persuade me, and I walked away on a miserable stroll up into the woods. As he said so justly, what was the loss of a few gold pieces compared with the heavier trials at home? Dora sick, worried, wearing nearly out, fighting a miserable battle. But still—O the shame and degradation of the thought — that wretched loss of gold *would* come up, and, I am convinced, is the *real* oppression on my mind at this moment. Could there be a better proof of the corruption and demoralisation of that vile temple of Satan?

These words of Grainger's are not so foolish after all. As he says, it cannot always go one way; and this did not occur to *his* mind, that it would amount to quite a suspension of the laws of chance, if there was to be ill-luck *always* against the players, or even against the player himself on different days. As the ball cannot drop into say number twenty-six, ten times running, or even three times, so a player cannot always be failing. He loses now, but *may* win next time. This is a sound analysis, though a little too refined for Grainger's intellect. Still his reasoning was just about risking one piece more or two. It makes the loss very little more, but might abolish the loss itself altogether. Oh, my poor sweet little pieces, if I had them back what a relief, what joy, what a new life, even as an earnest of hope of better things coming. There is the table d'hôte bell. But I have no heart to dine.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read at Nottingham, Thursday, February 4; Leicester, Friday, February 5; St. James's Hall, London, February 16; Glasgow, February 18; Edinburgh, February 19; Glasgow, February 22; Edinburgh, February 24; Glasgow, February 25; Edinburgh, February 26; St. James's Hall, London, March 2; Wolverhampton, March 4; Manchester, March 6 and 8; Hull, March, 10; York, March 11; Hull, March 12.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I. LIFE AT WESTHOPE.

"TEA, my lady!"

"Very well. Tell Lady Caroline—oh, here you are! I was just sending to tell you that tea was ready. I saw you come in from your ride just before the curtains were drawn."

"Did you? Then you must have seen a pretty draggletailed spectacle. I've caked my habit with mud and torn it into shreds, and generally distinguished myself."

"Did Mr. Biscoe blush?"

"Not a bit of it. Mr. Biscoe's a good specimen of a hard-riding parson, and seemed to like me the better the muddier and more torn I became. By the way, his wife is coming to dinner, isn't she? so I must drop my flirtation with the rector, and be on my best behaviour."

"Caroline, you are too absurd; the idea of flirting with a man like that!"

"Well, then, why don't you provide some one better for me? I declare, Margaret, you are ignorant of the simplest duties of hospitality! I can't flirt with West, because he's my brother-in-law, for one reason, and because you mightn't like it perhaps, and because I mightn't care about it myself much. And there's no one else in the house who——Oh, by the way, I'll speak about that just now—who else is coming to dinner?"

"Some people from the barracks—Colonel Tapp and Mr. Frampton, the man who hunted through all those papers the other day to find the paragraph you asked him about, don't you know; a Mr. Boyd, a good-looking fair-haired boy, with an eyeglass, one of the Ross-shire Boyds, who is reading somewhere in the neighbourhood with a tutor; the Biscoes, the Porters—people who live at those iron gates with the griffins which I showed you; and—I don't know—two or three others."

"Oh, heavens, what a cheerful prospect! I hate the army, and I detest good-looking boys with eyeglasses; and I've been all day with Mr. Biscoe, and I don't know the griffin people, nor the two or three others. Look here, Margaret, why don't you ask Mr. Joyce to dinner?"

"Mr. Joyce? I don't know—— Good heavens, Caroline, you don't mean Lord Hetherington's secretary?"

"I do indeed, Margaret—why shouldn't I? He is quite nice and gentlemanly, and has charming eyes."

"Caroline, I wonder at your talking such nonsense. You ought to know me sufficiently——"

"And you ought to know me sufficiently to understand there's nothing on earth I detest like being bored. I shall be bored out of my life by any of the people you have mentioned, while I'm sure I should find some amusement in Mr. Joyce."

"You might probably find a great deal of amusement in Norton, the steward, or in William, my footman; but you would scarcely wish me to ask them to dinner?"

"I think not—not in William, at all events. There is a dull decorum about Mr. Norton which one might find some fun in bearing——"

"Caroline, be quiet; you are *impayable!* Are you really serious in what you say about Mr. Joyce?"

"Perfectly—why not? I had some talk with him in the library the other day, and found him most agreeable."

"Well, then, I will send and say we expect him; will that satisfy you?"

"No, certainly not! Seriously, Margaret, for one minute. You know that I was only in fun, and that it cannot matter one atom to me whether this young man is asked to join your party or not. Only, if you *do* ask him, don't send. You know the sort of message which the footman would deliver, no matter what formula had been entrusted to him; and I should be very sorry to think that Mr. Joyce, or any other gentleman, should be caused a mortification through any folly of mine."

"Perhaps you think I ought to go to him and offer him a verbal invitation?"

"Certainly, if you want him at all—I mean if you intend asking him to dinner. You'll be sure to find him in the library. Now I'm dying to get rid of this soaked habit and this clinging skirt! So I'm off to dress." And Lady Caroline Mansergh gave her sister a short nod, and left the room.

Left alone, Lady Hetherington took a few minutes to recover herself. Her pet sister Caroline had always been a spoiled child, and accustomed to have her own way in the old home, in her own house when she married Mr. Mansergh—the richest, idlest, kindest old gentleman that ever slept in St. Stephen's first, and in Glasnevin Cemetery scarcely more soundly afterwards — and generally everywhere since she had lost him. But she had been always remarkable for particularly sound sense, and had a manner of treating objectionably pushing people, which succeeded in keeping them at a distance, better even than the frigid hauteur which Lady Hetherington indulged in. The countess knew this, and, acknowledging it in her inmost heart, felt that she could make no great mistake in acceding to her sister's wishes. Moreover, she reflected, after all it was a mere small country-house dinner that day; there was no one expected about whose opinion she particularly cared; and as the man was domiciled in the house, was useful to Lord Hetherington, and was presentable, it was only right to show him some civility.

So, after leaving the drawing-room on her way to dress for dinner, Lady Hetherington crossed the hall to the library, and at the far end of the room saw Mr. Joyce at work, under a shaded lamp. She went straight up to him, and was somewhat amused at finding that he, either not hearing her entrance, or imagining that it was merely some servant with a message, never raised his head, but continued grinding away at his manuscript.

"Mr. Joyce!" said her ladyship, slightly bending forward.

"Hey?" replied the scribe, in whose ear the tones, always haughty and imperious, however she might try to soften them, rang like a trumpet call. "I beg your pardon, Lady Hetherington," he added, rising from his seat; "I had no idea you were in the room."

"Don't disturb yourself, Mr. Joyce; I only looked in to say that we have a few friends coming to dinner to-night, and it will afford Lord Hetherington and myself much pleasure if you will join us."

"I shall be most happy," said Mr. Joyce. And then Lady Hetherington returned his bow, and he preceded her down the room and opened the door to let her pass.

"As if he'd been a squire of dames from his cradle," said her ladyship to herself. "The man has good hands, I noticed, and there was no awkwardness about him."

"What does this mean?" said Walter Joyce, when he reached his own room and was dressing for dinner. "These people have been more civil than I could have expected them to be to a man in my position, and Lord Hetherington especially has been kindness itself; but they have always treated me as what I am—'his lordship's secretary.' Whence this new recognition? One comfort is that, thanks to old Jack Byrne's generosity, I can make a decent appearance at their table. I laughed when he insisted on providing me with dress clothes, but he knew better. 'They can't do you any harm, my boy,' I recollect his saying, 'and they may do you some good;' and now I see how right he was. Fancy my going into society, and beginning at this phase of it! I wonder whether Marian would be pleased? I wonder——" And he sat down on the edge of his bed, and fell into a dreamy, abstracted state; the effect caused by Marian's last long letter was upon him yet. He had answered it strongly—far more strongly than he had ever written to her before—pointing out that, at the outset, they had never imagined that life's path was to be made smooth and easy to them; they had always known that they would have to struggle, and that it was specially unlike her to fold her hands and beg for the unattainable, simply because she saw it in the possession of other people. "She dared not tell him how little hope for the future, she had." That was a bad sign

indeed. In their last parting walk round the garden of the old school-house at Helmingham, she had hinted something of this, and he thought he had silenced her on the point; but her want of hope, her abnegation of interest, was now much more pronounced; and against such a feeling he inveighed with all the strength and power of his honest soul. If she gave in, what was to become of them, whose present discomforts were only made bearable by anticipation of the time when he would have her to share his lot?

"And after all, Marian," he had said in conclusion, "what does it all mean? This money for which you wish so much—I find the word studding every few lines of your letter—this splendour, luxury, comfort—call it by what name you will, what does it all mean? Who benefits by it? Not the old gentleman, who has passed his life in slaving for the acquisition of wealth! As I understand from you, his wife is dead, and his son almost estranged from him. Is this the end of it? If you could see his inmost heart, is he not pining for the woman who stood by his side during the conflict? and does he not feel the triumph empty and hollow without her to share it with him? Would he not sooner have his son's love, and trust, and confidence, than the conservatory, and the carriages, and the splendour on which you dwell so rapturously? If you could know all, you would learn that the happiest time of his life was when he was striving, in company with her he loved, and that the end now attained, however grand it may be, however above his original anticipations, is but poor and vain, now she is not there to share it with him. Oh, Marian, my heart's darling, think of this, and be assured of its truth! So long as we love each other, so long as the sincerity of that love gives us confidence in each other, all will be well, and it will be impossible to shut out hope. It is only when a shadow crosses that love, a catastrophe which seems impossible, but which we should pray God to avert, that hope can in the smallest degree diminish. Marian, my love, my life, think of this as I place it before you! We are both young, both gifted with health, and strength, and powers of endurance. If we fight the battle side by side, if we are not led away by envy and induced to fix the standard of our desires too high, we shall, we *must* succeed in attaining what we have so often hopefully discussed—the happiness of being all in all to each other, and leading our lives together, 'for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part.' I confess I can imagine no greater bliss—can you?"

He had had no answer to this letter, but that had not troubled him much. He knew that Marian was not fond of correspondence, that in her last letter she had given a full account of her new life, and that she could have but little to say; and he was further aware that a certain feeling of pride would prevent her from too readily endorsing his comments on her views; that she agreed with those comments, or that they would commend themselves to her natural sound sense on reflection, he had no doubt; and he was content to await calmly the issue of events.

The party assembled were waiting the announcement of dinner in the library, and when Joyce entered the room Lord Hetherington left the rug where he had been standing with two other gentlemen, and, advancing towards his secretary, took his hand, and said: "I am glad her ladyship has persuaded you to come out of seclusion, Mr. Joyce! Too much—what is it?—books, and work, and that kind of thing, is—is—the deuce, in point of fact!" And then his lordship went back to the rug, and Joyce having received a sufficiently distant bow from Lady Hetherington, retreated into a darkish corner of the room, into which the flickering firelight did not penetrate, and looked around him.

Lady Hetherington looked splendidly handsome, he thought. She was dressed in maroon-coloured velvet, lit up wonderfully in the firelight, which showed her classically-shaped head, and head-dress of velvet and black lace. Joyce had read much of Juno-looking women, but he had never realised the idea until he gazed upon that calm, majestic, imperious face, so clearly cold in outline, those large, solemnly-radiant eyes, that splendidly-moulded figure. The man who was bending over her chair as he addressed her, not deferentially, as Joyce felt that—not from her rank, but rather from her splendid beauty—she should be addressed, but on the contrary, rather flippantly, had a palpable curly wig, shaved cheeks, waxed moustache, and small white hands, which he rubbed gently together in front of him. He was Colonel Tapp, a Crimean hero, a very Paladin in war, but who had been worn by time, not into slovenry, but

into coxcombry. Mr. Biscoe, the rector of the parish, a big, broad-shouldered, bull-headed man, with clean-cut features, wholesome complexion, and breezy whiskers: excellent parson as well as good cross-country man, and as kind of heart as keen at sport, stood by her ladyship's side, and threw an occasional remark into the conversation. Joyce could not see Lady Caroline Mansergh, but he heard her voice coming from a recess on the far-side of the fireplace, and mingled with its bright, ringing Irish accent came the deep, growling bass of Captain Frampton, adjutant of the depôt battalion, and a noted amateur singer. The two gentlemen chatting with Lord Hetherington on the rug were magnates of the neighbourhood, representatives of old county families. Mr. Boyd, a very good-looking young gentleman, with crisp wavy hair and pink-and-white complexion, was staring hard at nothing through his eye-glass, and wondering whether he could fasten one of his studs, which had come undone, without any one noticing him; and Mr. Biscoe was in conversation with a foxy-looking gentleman, with sunken eyes, sharp nose, and keen gleaming teeth, in whom Joyce recognised Mr. Gould, Lord Hetherington's London agent, who was in the habit of frequently running down on business matters, and whose room was always kept ready for him.

Dinner announced and general movement of the company. At the table Joyce found himself seated by Lady Caroline Mansergh, her neighbour on the other side being Captain Frampton. After bowing and smiling at Mr. Joyce, Lady Caroline said:

"Now, Captain Frampton, continue, if you please!"

"Let me see!" said the captain, a good soldier and a good singer, but not overburdened with more brains than are necessary for these professions—"let me see! Gad—shamed to say, Lady Car'line, forgot what we were talkin' of!"

"Mr. Chennery—you remember now?"

"Yas, yas, 'course, thousand pardons! Well, several people heard him at Carabas House, think him wonderful!"

"A tenor, you say?"

"Pure tenor, one of the richest, purest tenor voices ever heard! Man's fortune's made—if he only behaves himself!"

"How do you mean, 'behaves himself,' Captain Frampton?" asked Lady Caroline, raising her eyebrows.

"Well, I mean sassiety, and all that kind of thing, Lady Caroline! Man not accustomed to sassiety might, as they say, put his foot in it!"

"I see," said Lady Caroline, with an assumption of gravity. "Exactly! and that would indeed be dreadful. But is this gentleman not accustomed to society?"

"Not in the least; and in point of fact not a gentleman, so far as I'm led to understand. Father's a shepherd; outdoor labouring something down at Lord Westonhanger's place in Wiltshire; boy was apprenticed to a stonemason, but people staying at the house heard of his singing, sent for him, and Lord Westonhanger was so charmed with his voice, had him sent to Italy and taught. That's the story!"

"Surely one that reflects great credit on all concerned," said Lady Caroline. "But I yet fail to see why Mr. Chennery should not behave himself!"

"Well, you see, Lady Caroline, Carabas House, and that sort of thing—people he'll meet there, you know, different from anything he's ever seen before."

"But he can but be a gentleman, Captain Frampton. If he were a prince, he could be no more!"

"No, exactly, course not; but pardon me, that's just it, don't you see, the difficulty is for the man to be a gentleman."

"Not at all; not the slightest difficulty!" And here Lady Caroline almost imperceptibly turned a little toward Joyce. "If Mr. Chennery is thrown into different society from that to which he has been hitherto accustomed, and is at all nervous about his reception or his conduct in it, he has merely to be natural and just as he always has been, to avoid any affectation, and he cannot fail to please. The art which he possesses, and the education he has received, are humanising influences, and he certainly contributes more than the average quota toward the enjoyment of what people call society."

Whether Captain Frampton was unconvinced by the argument, whether he found a difficulty in pursuing it, or whether he had by this time realised the fact that the soup was of superior quality, and worth paying attention to, are moot points; at all events, the one thing certain was, that he bowed and slightly shrugged his shoulders, and relapsed into silence, while Lady Caroline, with a half smile of victory, which somehow seemed to include Walter Joyce in its expanding ripple, replied across the table to a polite query of Mr. Biscoe's in reference to their recent ride.

She certainly was very beautiful! Joyce had thought so before, as he had caught transient glimpses of her flitting about the house; but now that he had, unnoticed and unseen, the opportunity of quietly studying her, he was astonished at her beauty. Her face was very pale, with an impertinent little nose, and deep violet eyes, and a small rosebud of a mouth; but perhaps her greatest charm lay in her hair, which lay in heavy thick chesnut clumps over her white forehead. Across it she wore the daintiest bit of precious lace, white lace, the merest apology for a cap, two long lappels pinned together by a diamond brooch, while the huge full clump at the back, unmistakably real, was studded with small diamond stars. She was dressed in a blue satin gown, set off with a profusion of white lace, and on her arm she wore a large heavy gold bracelet. Walter Joyce found himself gazing at her in an odd indescribable way. He had never seen anything like her, never realised such a combination of beauty, set off by the advantages of dress and surroundings. Her voice too, so bright and clear, and ringing, and her manner to him—to him? Was it not to him that she had really addressed these words of advice, although they were surely said in apparent reply to Captain Frampton's comments? If that were so, it was indeed kind of Lady Caroline, true, noble-hearted kindness; he must write and tell Marian of it.

He was thinking of this, and had in his mind a picture, confused, indeed, but full of small details which had a strange interest for him, and a vivid sadness too, of the contrast between the scene of which he formed at this moment a part, and those familiar to himself and to Marian. He was thinking of the homely simple life of the village, of the dear dead friend, so much a better man, so much a truer gentleman than any of these people, who were of so much importance in a world where he had been of so little; of the old house, the familiar routine of life, not wearisome with all its sameness, the sweetness of his first love. He was thinking of the splendour, the enervating, bewildering luxury of his present surroundings, among which he sat so strange, so solitary, save for the subtle reassuring influence, the strange, unaccountable support and something like companionship in the tones of that fair and gracious lady's voice, in the light of her swift, flitting smile in which he thought he read an admission that the company was little more to her taste than to his, had as little in common with her intellectual calibre as with his. He could not have told how she conveyed this impression to him, if he had tried to explain his feelings to any third person; he could not explain it to himself, when he thought over the events of the evening, alone in his room, which was a dingy apartment when compared with the rest of the house, but far better than any which had ever called him master; but there it was, strong and strangely attractive, mingling with the sights and sounds around him, and with the dull dead pain at his heart which had been caused by Marian's letter, and which he had never quite succeeded in conquering. There were unshed, but not unseen tears in his eyes, and a slight tremulous motion in his lips, which one pair of eyes at the table, quick, with all their languor, keen, with all their disdainful slowness, did not fail to see. The owner of those beautiful eyes did not quite understand, could not "fathom" the meaning of the sudden glitter in his; "idle tears," indeed, on such an occasion, and in such company; but, with the fine unfailing instinct of a coquette, she discerned, more clearly than Walter Joyce himself had felt it, that she counted for something in the origin and meaning of those unshed tears, and of that nervous twitching.

Lady Caroline had just removed her eyes with well feigned carelessness from Walter's face, after a covert glance, apparently casual, but in reality searching, in order to effect which she had leaned forward, and plucked some geranium leaves from a bouquet near her on the table; and Walter was removing himself still farther from the scene around, into the land of reverie, when a name spoken by Mr. Gould, and making an odd accidental harmony with his thoughts, fixed his wandering attention.

"What sort of weather had you in Hampshire?" asked Lord Hetherington, in one of those irksome pauses usually selected by some individual who is at once commonplace and good-natured to distinguish himself by uttering an inane sentiment, or asking an awkward question.

"Awful, I should fancy," said Lady Hetherington, in the most languid of her languid tones. "Awful, if it has been like the weather here. Were you really obliged to travel, Mr. Gould? I can't fancy any one going anywhere in such weather."

"As it happened," said Mr. Gould, with a rather impatient glance towards her lady-

ship—for he could not always smile complacently when she manifested her normal unconsciousness that anybody could have anything to do, not entirely dependent on his or her own pleasure and convenience—"as it happened, I had not to go. A few days after I told his lordship the particulars of the sale of land, I had a letter informing me that the matter was all off for the present."

"Indeed!" said Lord Hetherington, "a doosed bore for Langley, isn't it? He has been wanting to pick up something in that neighbourhood for a long time. But the sale will ultimately come off, I suppose, unless some one buys the land over Langley's head by private contract."

"There's no fear of that, I think," said Mr. Gould; "but I took precautions. I should not like Sir John to lose the slice off Woolgreaves he wants. The place is in a famous hunting country, and the plans are settled upon—like Sir John, isn't it?—for his hunting box."

"I don't know that part of Hampshire at all," said Lord Hetherington, delighted at finding a subject on which he could induce one of his guests to talk, without his being particularly bound to listen. "Very rich and rural, isn't it? Why didn't the—ah, the person—sell the land Langley wanted there?"

"For rather a melancholy reason," replied Mr. Gould, while Lady Hetherington and the others looked bored by anticipation. Rather inconsiderate and bad taste of Mr. Gould to tell about "melancholy reasons" in a society which only his presence and that of the secretary rendered at all "mixed." But Mr. Gould, who was rather full of the subject, and who had the characteristic—so excellent in a man of business in business hours, but a little tiresome in social moments—of believing that nothing could equal in interest his clients' affairs, or in importance his clients themselves, went on, quite regardless of the strong apathy in the face of the countess. "The letter which prevented my going down to Woolgreaves on the appointed day was written by a lady residing in the house, to inform me that the owner of the property, a Mr. Creswell, very well known in those parts, had lost his only son, and was totally unfit to attend to any business. The boy was killed, I understand, by a fall from his pony."

"Tom Creswell killed!" exclaimed Walter Joyce, in a tone which directed the attention of every one at the table to the "secretary."

"I beg your pardon," Joyce went on, "but will you kindly tell me all you know of this matter? I know Mr. Creswell, and I knew this boy well. Are you sure of the fact of his death?"

The paleness of Walter's face, the intensity of his tone, held Lady Caroline's attention fixed upon him. How handsome he was, and the man could evidently feel too! How nice it would be to make him feel, to see the face pale, and to hear the voice deepen, like that, for her. It would be quite *new*. She had any amount of flirtation always at hand, whenever she chose to summon its aid in passing the time, but feeling did not come at call, and she had never had much of *that* given her. These were the thoughts of only a moment, flashing through her mind before Mr. Gould had time to answer Joyce's appeal.

"I am sorry I mentioned the fact at so inappropriate a time," said Mr. Gould, "but still more sorry that there is no doubt whatever of its truth. Indeed, I think I can show you the letter." Mr. Gould wore a dress coat, of course, but he could not have dined comfortably, if he had not transferred a mass of papers from his morning-coat to its pockets. This mass he extricated with some difficulty, and selecting one, methodically endorsed with the date of its receipt, from the number, he handed it to Walter.

Lady Hetherington was naturally shocked at the infringement of the *bienséances* caused by this unfortunate incident, and was glancing from Mr. Gould to Mr. Joyce, from one element of the "mixture" in the assembled society to the other, with no pleasant expression of countenance—when Lady Caroline came to the rescue, with gracefulness, deftness, lightness, all her own, and by starting an easy unembarrassed conversation with the gentleman opposite to her, in which she skilfully included her immediate neighbours, she dissipated all the restraints which had temporarily fallen upon the party. Something interesting to the elevated minds of the party, something different from the unpleasantness of a boy's being killed, whom nobody knew anything about, at a place which did not belong to anybody,—and the character of the dinner party, momentarily threatened, was triumphantly retrieved.

Walter saw that the letter which Mr. Gould handed him was in Marian's writing. It contained an announcement of the calamity which had occurred, and an intimation that Mr. Creswell could not attend to any matters of business at present. That was all. Walter read the brief letter with

sincere concern, commiseration for the childless rich man, and also with the thrill, half of curiosity, half of painless jealousy, with which one regards the familiar and beloved handwriting, when addressed, however formally, to another. He returned the letter to Mr. Gould, with a simple expression of thanks, and sat silent. No one noticed him. Every one had forgotten the dismal occurrence about somebody whom nobody knew, down in some place that did not belong to anybody. He had time to think unquestioned.

"I wonder she has not written to me. The accident occurred four days ago," he thought. "I suppose she has too much to do for them all. God bless her, she will be their best comfort."

Though unversed in the minor arts and smaller tactics of society, Walter was not so dull or awkward as to be ignorant of the skill and kindness with which Lady Caroline had acted on his behalf. When the ladies were to leave the room, as she passed him, their eyes met, and each looked at the other steadily. In her glance there was undisguised interest, in his—gratitude.

RABBIT SKIN.

THERE was a time when I was ignorant enough to wonder why a ragged little urchin with the London cry of "Any rabbit skins to-day, marm?" distressed himself to shout so often at my area steps. I then thought that he was a seller, not a buyer, and it had perplexed me to discover what use persons in private life could possibly find for the article he seemed to be offering for sale, a string of which he wore suspended about his youthful neck. That was crass ignorance, but now that I know better, ever so much better, I go about doubting whether one man in fifty thousand of all those I see about the world could give anything but the vaguest answer to the question, What's done with the rabbit's skin? Shall this state of ignorance continue? These disclosures are the answer to it.

The elementary fact is, of course, this. All hare skins and rabbit skins disappear. They are bought at our doors, taken away and never sold again. Nobody ever bought fur warranted as real coney, or met with rabbit's fur as such, in any other shape; and the only avowed form of hare skin is that sold by chemists as a "Hare-skin Chest Protector." I solved the mystery by getting an introduction to a wholesale skinner upon the south side of the Thames.

"Yes, sir, *we* perform the skinning part of the business," said he, as he led me through a dry and rather spacious warehouse, on one side of which, stowed away in racks, stood some hundreds of brown-paper bags, like so many half peck loaves.

"Contain rabbit wool, those, sir; ready for the market. Worth at the present moment six shillings per pound. That is, the best sort. During the summer months the wild rabbit is let alone, and at that season his coat is like the tame rabbit's, coarse and thin, what, indeed, we of the trade calls 'stagey.' About November my gentleman puts off his summer dress and goes into a new and beautiful warm suit. Then it is that collectors go round, both in town and country, buying up the skins. Now, sir, *you* would say a skin is a skin, *we* say it is a 'whole,' or a 'half,' or a 'quarter,' or a 'rack,' or a 'sucker.' Suckers are skins of infant rabbits, and of little value. Eight racks are equal to one whole. The relative value of the others is told in their names. Wholes are worth from three shillings to three and sixpence a dozen. At a rough guess more than two thousand dozen of coney skins are cut in London in one day. There are country towns such as High Wycombe in Bucks, where the business is also followed. The wool is chiefly used in the manufacture of felt hats. Cloth also has been made from it. When the cutting used to be done by hand it was a very slow process, but it is now done by machinery. A good workman by hand labour would get through sixty or seventy skins in a day. A machine can be made to cut one hundred and twenty skins in an hour. We can't find skins enough to keep it always going. The average day's work of a machine is seventy dozen. Before the skin is fit for cutting it has to be prepared by the puller; but if you will follow me you may see the process."

A long broad flight of stairs conducted us to a workshop from whence there came wafted on a strong animal effluvium, the refrain of "Champagne Charley." The strain, but not the stink, died away as we entered. Sitting upon low benches were ranged seventy or eighty women, young, middle aged, and old, busily pulling. They were all in rags; but I learned that ragged gown and torn boots was the regular working costume, and that most of them had other and better clothing stowed away in a room hard by. The stamp of very low life was on the features of many, more especially among the elder ladies. While passing along their ranks, once or twice there was a confusion of smells, including something unmistakably suggestive of Old Tom. My conductor accounted for this presently, by informing me that, as it was only Tuesday, a good many of the hands had hardly got into working fettle yet, after keeping the feast of Saint Monday, whose shrines are the bars of public-houses. The air was bad enough if there had been no smell in it, for dust and fine particles of hair were floating all around and settling quietly upon the heads and shoulders of the labourers.

I directed my attention to a woman who had just received a bundle of work. She took up a skin turned inside out, as it had been torn from the back of the rabbit. With a sharp knife, such as may be found upon any leather-

cutter's counter, she briskly whipped off the feet (which are always left attached to the skin); slit the little arm-holes; then ran the blade up the neck and head. The skin now showed a tolerably even surface. After thus operating upon a large portion of the bundle, she caught up a piece of whiting, and where there were any signs of fat upon the flesh side of the skin rubbed it over therewith. Sometimes her work was hard and ridgy, from not having been properly stretched out while drying. In that case a pan of water and a hare's foot took the place of the whiting. She next picked up a skin, laid it upon her knee, slipping a string loop over it, and under her foot as a shoemaker does his stirrup, and after protecting her thumb with a stout leathern stall, took her knife once more in hand and began pulling. The tail end of the skin was turned from her, that she might work against the grain. Now and then some tuft or knot in the wool brought into play the card, a kind of curry-comb. Its back and handle are of wood, and for its teeth it has close rows of pin-wire. At every pull of the knife, out came a bunch of grey hairs, till presently a most beautiful under clothing of delicate wool, darker than the surface hair, was disclosed. The pullings are allowed to fall upon the floor, and at the end of the task carefully gathered up and stored away. They will make stuffing for cheap beds. Cheap lodginghouse-keepers, too, remarked my guide, very often impose a rabbit for a goose-down bed upon their customers. "The price of down just now is bad. Not worth more than threepence per pound. That's because feathers are cheap. Some time back it brought sixpence."

"What becomes of your waste?" I asked.

"Waste, sir! No waste here. All our trimmings and stuff, being of a very heating nature, makes an excellent manure for some things, hops for instance, and finds a ready market. The pullers all work piece work, and if they stick to 'collar' can earn ten or twelve shillings a week, but a great many of them, as I told you just now, will keep Saint Monday, and some do not come to shop before Wednesday. Pretty creatures among them I can tell you. They take their dinner and tea upon the premises, the employer finding firing accommodation. They come at nine in the morning, and quit at eight in the evening. Formerly much of this work was given out, but it is more to the interest of the employer to have everything done upon his own premises."

I was now taken into the machinery department. A shop eighty or ninety feet long and some five-and-twenty wide opened before me. On one side and near the roof ran a shaft and drum, whence leather bands were made to connect themselves with a series of six machines ranged down the middle of the floor. They were not very complex of structure. The drum-band moved a wheel which moved another wheel, which moved a cylinder about a foot and a half long and six inches in diameter. Upon this cylinder were arranged diagonally five knives, which in their revolution came into the most delicate articulation with a perfectly straight-set bed knife. Two fluted rollers in front were used as a means of feeding the knives. The nose end of a skin was introduced between these rollers. Away it glided, and lo, in a second or two the fleece or lock of wool began to descend into a tin receiver. The skin proper, or *pelt*, fell upon the floor cut up fine as hay. The fleece was now turned over in a sheet of brown paper, and laid upon a kind of counter. Having had certain portions removed by a picker, it passed into the hands of a young woman, called a locker, who sorted out other parts; for be it known a rabbit's, unlike a gentleman's coat, is not expected to be of the same quality all over. The *pate*, *cheek*, and *sides* had been put apart, and the most valuable portion of the lock, the back, remained. This was dexterously made into a flattish kind of ball, and with the grain still unbroken placed carefully into a brown paper bag, ready for sale. While the backs were worth six shillings a pound, the sides were valued by the pound at four shillings, and the pate and cheek at not more than two and sixpence.

I observed that a number of the skins being cut, were of a very deep orange cast, and asked the reason. "After the skins have left the pulling-room," said my informant, "they are taken into a shed, and the wool is damped with a preparation of aquafortis, mercury, and other chemicals. They are then carried into a heated apartment where they dry, and in so doing, turn to the colour you see; that is, they are what *we* call 'carroted.' We mostly give it them in a milder form, and then they don't change colour."

"And why are they carroted?"

"That is to make the wool easier to work, when in the hands of the hat maker."

Each machine then requires four attendants, a feeder, a picker, a locker, and a clipper. The picker is always a girl of fourteen or fifteen. The other three are young women. The clipper's duty is, with a pair of shears, to snip off the wool from any fragments of skin that cannot be passed through the machine, or that fall off while the skins are being cut. Feeders and lockers alike are paid twelve shillings a week, clippers nine, and pickers six shillings. All employed in this shop were of a superior cast to the pullers, evidently a remove or two above them, and were dressed in neat cotton gowns and coarse linen aprons. There was a man to superintend the whole of the machinery, see to the grinding of the knives, and so forth. Every night the wool cut during the day is carefully weighed and compared with the number of skins given out, and a pretty just estimate formed of the amount of care and honesty exercised in this department. The instrument by which the work is performed is known as the American machine, and was introduced into England about five-and-thirty years ago. Before that, for some fifteen years, the chopping machine was in use. It was a vast improvement upon hand labour, but slow in comparison to the machine which takes its

place. As the name implies, it chopped off the wool, and did not cut the pelt up into shreds, as the American machine does, but left it perfectly whole.

"And what becomes of the pelt?" I asked.

"Principally used for making size," was the reply. Then, with a wicked twinkle of the eye, and in a tone highly confidential, "I have heard that it does also find its way, in various jelly forms, to the tables of the wealthy. And why not, sir? A very clean feeder is the rabbit. Ah! and it does make a good jelly, too, even in its rough state; for in the summer months, when paunch is not always fit to eat, I often boil down a handful of pelt for our yard dog, and he seems to like it, and it never disagrees with him. Why shouldn't they prepare it, and flavour it, and sent it as a delicacy to May Fair?"

Having spent nearly three-quarters of an hour with the pullers and cutters, I found, upon turning to leave, that I had myself a good deal of the rabbit about me. The flue and the dust had given a downy coat to my back, and I looked as if I was already past the first stage of a metamorphosis. However, I could soon be disenchanted with a clothes-brush.

Before the silk hat came in, an event celebrated by the "Free and Easy" Lyrist of the day, who recommended all young men who wished

To cut a shine
To take his advice at once, and buy a four and nine,

rabbit wool was in as great demand as now, being used with lambs' wool for the bodies of the beaver hats. Hare skins in those days were twice as valuable as they now are. The wool was used to assist in napping. The long, coarse, red hair was not pulled out, as in the case of the rabbit, but was shorn down to the under wool, which has a glossy black surface, beneath which, again, all is most delicately silky and white.

A beaver hat in the good old times cost twenty-seven and sixpence, or a guinea and a half. But though men paid for hats napped with beaver wool, they very often got only an imitation article. The best substitute was furnished by an animal known in the fur trade as the neutre. This creature is about the size of a moderately small dog; perhaps a very big cat would be nearer the mark. Of an amphibious turn, the neutre inhabits the banks of South American rivers, and can swim and dive with any water rat.

"There is nothing more to be learned on these premises," remarked my guide, as we again descended, "but if you would like to see how the dressing of rabbit skins is managed I shall be glad to show you." I bowed my thanks. "Formerly fur cutting and fur dressing were one business; now they are kept quite separate. About five minutes' walk from here is a dresser's, not a large business, but there you can see just as much as you would at the biggest place in London."

After a walk of a quarter of mile or thereabouts, through back streets and grimy passages, we paused in front of an old-fashioned house with a flight of three stone steps, and a cellar gaping with open mouth beneath what had once been the front-parlour window. A little wicket gate with a spring lock yielded to the touch of my guide, and we were in the shop. Small bundles of dressed rabbit skins were tumbled confusedly together behind the counter, and another batch stood piled more regularly against the wall. A man who looked as though he had just been delivering a load of bricks made his appearance. He was covered with a fine red dust, and spoke with a strong Celtic accent. He informed us that the "maisther" was not in, but was "expected" every minute, whereupon my guide said we were going below, and that if the governor came in he was to be told where he might find us. Stepping carefully down a dark winding stair I quickly reached the lower regions. The light that entered from the cellar-flap was dim. For all that, I could see that the flooring was of earth and the ceiling of rough planks and joists. The odour was that of a hot menagerie. I must confess, too, that I was startled, when on turning a corner, I suddenly came upon five savage-looking creatures perfectly naked, with eyes that rolled wildly in the uncertain light, and whose features were disfigured with red stains. They swayed their bodies from side to side as in some mystic dance, muttering meanwhile in a language quite unknown to me, what seemed to be an incantation. I fell back, but my conductor reminded me of his presence by whispering in my ear, "Tubbers, sir!" Reassured I took a second glance, and true enough each man was dancing up to his middle in a tub. A piece of canvas nailed to the staves was secured by a string to the performer's waist. This to prevent the escape of his steam.

"Gave you a start, didn't it?"

"It did, indeed."

"Irishmen to a man," he continued; "and precious hard-working fellows they are. They begin that fun at eight o'clock in the morning, and very often are not out of their tubs again except for meals till eight at night. Frequently they take their tea in the tub rather than put themselves to the trouble of dressing."

"Warm work, seemingly," I remarked.

My eyes having adapted themselves to the light, I could see the perspiration coursing down the skin of the man nearest me, fretting little channels through the colouring matter with which he was coated.

"Whatever are they about?"

"Tubbing rabbit skins, making the pelt into leather."

"They look like painted savages."

"Yes, that's the mahogany dust. The skins are taken in their raw state, as you saw the pullers get them. The feet are cut off. To make them a bit soft, they are rubbed through the piece of rope nailed in a loop against yonder beam. After that they are well buttered, not with Dorset at eighteenpence a pound, the commonest tub scrapings will do as well. They

are then handed over to one of these gentlemen, who begins dancing, and his perspiration mingling with the butter, gradually converts the pelt into leather. Mahogany dust is now introduced, which completely clears away any superfluous grease. This done the skins are taken out, opened, and handed over to the flesher. Here he is." The person alluded to had just come tumbling in the most professional manner down the open throat of the cellar, to avoid the trouble of the staircase. He said, "Good morning," and at once took a seat where he got full benefit of the daylight. An upright post stood before him, into which was fixed perpendicularly a knife about a foot and a half long. The edge was turned from him. He took up a skin perfectly flat and soft, but which looked far too wide to have belonged to a coney. Having further stretched it by giving a sideway tug or two, he brought its pelt against the blade, and in a few minutes had pared off the whole of the outward integument, thus exposing a most delicate leather, equal to any dress kid. The skin was now ready for dying; a process usually managed off the premises. The dyer generally is some German living in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel or Bethnal Green. In a few days it finds its way back to the dresser so completely changed that not even a rabbit—much less any lady—would understand it to be a rabbit skin. Now it passes into the hands of the manufacturer of collars, cuffs, tippets, muffs, &c., and very soon appears behind a sheet of plate glass, ticketed "Mock Sable," "Mock Neutre," &c., or without the prefix "mock." People who fancy that they know the real article when they see it, might be taken in by a mock sable, no one could possibly be deceived by mock ermine. That is a complete mockery. It is attempting too much. It is like trying to palm copper off for gold. A child might see that mock ermine is only white rabbit skin, though everybody may not know that the little black tails which ornament its surface are not tails at all, but made of strippings from the legs of black rabbits.

THE ECLIPSE SEEN IN INDIA.

In number four hundred and eighty-four of our last volume, we gave some account of what might be expected from the then coming eclipse, looking at it from the French scientific point of view. As the event was followed by two very remarkable circumstances, we now relate briefly what occurred according to the same authorities, and notably that of M. Henri de Parville. There is no need to remind the reader of our neighbours' natural and honourable jealousy as to their priority in any discovery.

When the mission charged by the Minister of Public Instruction with observing the eclipse of the 18th August last, embarked at Marseilles, M. de Parville wrote: "Most of the European governments are sending missions to Hindostan and the coast of Siam. It is fortunate that French astronomy will be represented at this sort of competitive meeting to be held at the extremity of Asia, and of which the eclipse will be the principal object. It affords an excellent opportunity of proving that our astronomy has been calumniated, and that it is capable of occupying, now as formerly, the foremost rank in the world. Our anticipation has been fulfilled. France has brilliantly confirmed her preponderance. Henceforward, there is connected with the French mission to India an ineffaceable souvenir, a striking discovery, which will mark an epoch in our astronomical annals. The learned world owes it entirely to M. Janssen, the envoy of the Minister and the Académie des Sciences."

Let us now state what this discovery is. Until very lately, it cannot be denied, we had very incomplete notions respecting the physical constitution of the sun. Strange enough, from a distance of ninety millions of miles, more or less, we weighed it, calculated its superficial area, determined its enormous volume, fixed the time of its rotation on its axis, but *what* this dazzling sphere was, no man could tell—whether a solid or liquid globe, or merely a balloon of white-hot vapours. To increase our perplexity, on its brilliant disc towards the centre black spots were noticed here and there, whose configuration changed ceaselessly. They revolved with the sun, and sometimes appeared in considerable numbers. It was calculated that some of them occupied a space four times the total surface of the earth. Their diameter sometimes exceeded thirty thousand miles, that of the earth being eight thousand only. Consequently they presented abysses in which the earth itself would make about the same figure as a big stone thrown into a well.

It can hardly be wondered that the spots on the sun set astronomers' imaginations to work. Fontenelle's ideas respecting the plurality of worlds still retained their hold on many minds. Every star and planet must be habitable. The sun was peopled with inhabitants. It has already been told how the sun was enveloped with atmosphere over atmosphere, one screening its surface from insupportable glare, another radiating light and heat to the outer universe. The sun's spots were rents through these overlying atmospheres, allowing us a peep at the solid and shaded solar surface beneath. Great men, like Herschell and Arago, believed in or accepted this hypothesis, which we now feel too complex and ingenious to be true.

It has also been told how Bunsen and others, by spectral analysis, i.e. by examining the spectrum cast by a prism, enabled us to glance into infinite space and scrutinise the materials of which the stars are made. There does not, in fact, exist a substance which, when burning, does not send us its own distinct luminous note. Our eye, unfortunately, is unable to appreciate their differences. That organ, inferior to our ear, fails to catch the shades of this glittering music; there are chromatic scales which it cannot seize. Nevertheless, by a clever artifice, the difficulty is got over to some extent. The eye is enabled to

appreciate the peculiar characteristics of each individual light, from whatever radiant source it reaches us.

If we put a glass prism in the course of a ray of light, that light, by traversing the prism, is decomposed into its primitive elements. It is an experiment which may be tried any sunshiny day; and sometimes an icicle, drawing-room ornament, or a gem, will try it for us. At first sight, the eye perceives a series of lovely hues ranged one above the other, calling to mind the colours of the rainbow, with which, in fact, they are identical. On inspecting the party-coloured ribbon so obtained more closely, we discover, when the light comes from the sun, hundreds of black stripes of extremest fineness. When the light proceeds from an incandescent solid or liquid body, the stripes disappear, and the coloured ribbon or spectrum, is continuous. If, on the contrary, the light is given out by burning gas, bright and brilliant stripes appear in the spectrum. If, lastly, the source of light is an incandescent nucleus enclosed in a gaseous envelope, the image, as is the case with the sun, is traversed by a series of black lines.

Both the black and the brilliant lines were long a puzzle to natural philosophers. In 1822 Herschell remarked that when salts of lime, copper, and strontian were introduced into a flame, luminous lines were produced in the spectrum of that flame. Not long afterwards, Brewster and Talbot ascertained that the brilliant stripes varied with the nature of the body put into the flame. Common salt, for instance, gives a bright yellow stripe. Potash causes the simultaneous appearance of a red stripe and a violet stripe. It was clear, therefore, that the *bright* lines of the spectrum resulted from the presence of determinate compounds in the flame. But what of the *black* stripes?

The labours of several other philosophers helped Messieurs Kirchoff and Bunsen to demonstrate undeniably, in 1860, that every bright light in the spectrum is transformed into a dark one, *when a source of intense light exists behind the flame.* Example: soda gives a bright yellow stripe. Put an electric light behind the flame producing the spectrum, and instantly the bright stripe disappears, to give place to a corresponding black one. The fact is easily accounted for, when we remember that the property of emitting light, like that of radiating heat, is combined with the property of absorbing it in inverse proportion. The more light a luminous object gives out, the less it will take in. The more capable a flame is of emitting light, the more does it, from that very circumstance, extinguish a light placed behind it. It is therefore clear that every line which is more luminous than the neighbouring portions of the spectrum of a flame, will necessarily become darker as soon as a source of light is placed behind it. Such is the answer to the black line enigma.

But the spectrum of the solar light is cut up and riddled with black lines through and through. The conclusion is that incandescent flames or vapours, containing a great number of volatilised substances, surround the sun, and that behind those flames there exists a source of light still more powerful and intense than they are. MM. Kirchoff and Bunsen carefully examined the *position* of the lines produced in the solar spectrum by the principal substances found on the earth, and they then turned them black by the application of a more intense source of light. Now, they found that there was an absolute identity in the situation and distance of the black stripes in the solar spectrum, and of the stripes thus artificially produced. This precise coincidence allows us to conclude the existence, both in the sun and the earth, of certain constituent elements. The light emitted by the sun indicates the presence in it of iron, magnesium, sodium, potassium, barium, copper, manganese, zinc, &c. Hitherto they have been unable to ascertain the existence of gold, silver, lead, tin, antimony, cadmium, arsenic, mercury, &c.

We have thus a telegraph established between the stars and ourselves. The telegrams reach us in letters of fire. The lines of the spectrum replace the letters of the alphabet. Every element has its characteristic signs; but the reading of this alphabet is very complicated, and we have scarcely as yet begun to spell it. Evidently discoveries will be greatly multiplied when we have learnt to read it fluently. Nevertheless the principal stars, comets (one of which has been found to contain carbon), and nebulæ have already been explored with considerable success.

It was an inevitable consequence of the preceding facts that the habitable condition of the sun is a fallacy, and that we do *not* see the sun's soil at the bottom of his spots. Our central life-giving luminary must consist of a gaseous incandescent atmosphere containing metallic vapours, inclosing a solid or liquid burning nucleus. The spots in this case would be veritable clouds, produced by the partial and local condensation of solar vapours. There is a discrepancy between Kirchoff's observations and Arago's experiments on polarised light; but the apparent contradiction has been reconciled by an able French astronomer, M. Faye. Kirchoff's spectral observations are quite consistent with those afforded by a perfectly gaseous sphere holding solid particles in suspension.

The sun, therefore, must be set down as neither solid nor liquid, but gaseous, as might be inferred from its slight mean density. This theory has the further philosophical advantage of being applicable to the other heavenly bodies, each one of which would pass through successive phases corresponding to the divers epochs of their evolution and progress. Each heavenly body must successively experience the gaseous, liquid, and solid states. The sun, the earth, and the moon, for instance, offer us the three distinct ages in the life of worlds. The earth once must have been for the moon what the sun is now for us. The moon's smaller mass would sooner grow cold. Then the earth, after having been what the sun is,

would become encrusted with a solid shell whose Ætnas and Vesuviuses, whose German and Pyreneean thermal waters betray the fires still smouldering within. We are, fortunately for us, behindhand with regard to the moon, but considerably in advance of the sun. Every heavenly body must undergo the same successive transformations in the eternal harmony of the universe.

Another mode of investigating the sun's constitution is the observation of total eclipses. At such times, the moon, by screening almost the whole of the solar disc, prevents the observer from being blinded by excess of light. The outline and profile of the sun, which could not be examined under ordinary circumstances, are then distinguished with perfect clearness. During the eclipse of 1860 the French astronomers who went to Spain distinctly saw the different peculiarities presented by the brilliant crown which surrounds the moon's black disc. In the middle of the luminous ring they perceived what looked like pink or red clouds.

These "protuberances," to retain the name first given to them, appeared under very varied guise. Before the eclipse of 1860, some observers were inclined to take them for the summits of exceedingly lofty mountains rising above the solar atmosphere. But after it, doubt was no longer possible. The semblances of mountain peaks, it is true, were seen; but pointed were less frequent than rounded and lengthy forms. Many protuberances, moreover, were absolutely detached from the sun, like the cumulus clouds which float in our atmosphere. Others were bent in a sidewise direction, recalling flames under the influence of a current of air. A few French savans considered the protuberances as optical illusions produced by the moon's interposition; but the majority regarded them as appendages composed of fiery vapours streaming into the upper regions of the solar atmosphere. Spectral analysis, still in its infancy, had not yet said its say.

The eclipse of 1868 was therefore impatiently awaited. M. Janssen, well known by his spectroscopic researches, directed his course to Masulipatam. Afterwards, advised by persons who knew the country, he determined to proceed to Guntoor. Scarcely a week after the event, he sent by telegraph the agreeable news, "Eclipse well observed; protuberances gaseous." M. Stéphan, who directed the Malacca expedition, announced, a month afterwards, that four protuberances had been seen on the corona, and their gaseous nature determined by their spectrum. Moreover, from the undue prolongation of brilliant lines in the spectrum, M. Rayet deduced the conclusion that a certain portion of the incandescent gaseous matter of which the protuberances consist, extends to a height in the solar atmosphere beyond the limits assigned to it by human eyes.

In a letter to the Minister of Public Instruction, dated 19th September, M. Janssen wrote: "Not having the time to send a detailed account to-day, I will have the honour of doing so by next post. Guntoor has doubtless been the most favoured station. The sky was clear, especially during the totality, and my powerful nine-feet-focus telescopes allowed me to pursue the analytical study of all the phenomena of the eclipse. Immediately after the totality, two magnificent protuberances appeared: one of them, more than three minutes in height, shone with a splendour difficult to conceive. The analysis of its light immediately informed me that it consisted of an immense incandescent gaseous column, principally composed of hydrogen.

"But the most important result of these observations is the discovery of a method which suggested itself during the actual occurrence of the eclipse, and which permits the study of the protuberances and the circumsolar regions *at all times*, without having to wait for the passage of an opaque body in front of the sun's disc.

"The very day after the eclipse, the new method was successfully put in practice, and I was able to witness the phenomena presented by a fresh eclipse, which lasted the whole day long. Yesterday's protuberances were profoundly modified. Of the grand protuberance there scarcely remained a trace, and the distribution of the gaseous matter was quite different to what it had been. From that day up to the 4th of September I have constantly studied the sun with this object in view. I have drawn up maps of the protuberances, which show with what rapidity (often in a few minutes) these immense masses of gas change their form and place. Lastly, during this period, which has been, as it were, an eclipse lasting seventeen days, I have collected a great number of facts, which presented themselves spontaneously, respecting the physical constitution of the sun."

M. Janssen's method, like Columbus's finding America, will appear very simple now it is known. On looking at the sun near its outer edge, but a little outside it, where the protuberances show themselves, it is clear that not only the radiations from the great luminary itself will meet the eye, but also, mingled with them, the light of the protuberances. Consequently, the spectrum of the mixed radiations ought to contain both the black stripes of the solar rays and the bright stripes of the protuberances. And, in fact, when M. Janssen had recognised the bright lines of the protuberances, he found them again below the black lines of the solar spectrum and in their prolongations. Consequently, there are two systems of lines: one lying above the other. By reading the lower scale, you have before you the characteristic features of the protuberances. But we do not yet know our spectral alphabet; we are only beginning to learn to read.

M. Janssen expressses his high appreciation of the reception given him by the English authorities in India. A steamer was placed at his disposal to take him from Madras to Masulipatam; another for the Godavery; and a young sub-collector was attached to his mission, to smooth any difficulties that might arise. He ought now to have reached Calcutta, and proposes to carry out in the Himalayas certain

physico-terrestrial researches recommended by the Académie.

A curious incident, not without precedent, has occurred with relation to the new discovery. It will be remembered that when M. Le Verrier, by mathematical calculation, indicated the place of the still unseen planet Neptune, Mr. Adams, almost simultaneously, by the same means arrived at the same result. In the present case, at the very time when M. Janssen's letter reached France, Mr. Norman Lockyer, while exploring the outskirts of the sun, observed the bright lines which betray a protuberance, and which he found upon the black lines of the ordinary spectrum. Mr. Lockyer was acquainted with the position of the lines of the protuberances indicated by MM. Rayet, Tennant, and Herschell; and he was able, by comparison, to recognise, like M. Janssen, the lines characteristic of the protuberances.

The discovery was made on the 20th of October, communicated to Mr. Balfour Stewart on the 21st, and transmitted on the 23rd to Mr. Warren De la Rue, then in Paris. On the 25th, the Moniteur published M. Janssen's letter. On the 26th, that letter, and also the English letter to Mr. Warren De la Rue, were simultaneously communicated to the Académie des Sciences. The coincidence is singular. The French astronomer, however, while fully admitting the independence of his rival's proceeding, claims, nevertheless, a month's priority in the discovery.

Be it so. Two philosophers working separately, have supplied us with the means of sounding space. We are enabled by the spectroscope to test the nature of objects not only at prodigious distances, but in regions which are absolutely invisible and impenetrable by human eye. And to connect all this with what exists at home, the magic tell-tale has whispered to us that a comet which flitted past us in June, although at an enormous distance, carried about with it volatilised, in its eccentric wanderings through the heavens, the same elements which here lie entombed and imprisoned, though not for ever, in the shape of coal. If it would only crystallise properly and come back to us, it would be the finest diamond that ever was seen. Fancy the discovery of such an islet fallen into the sea, even if not bigger nor taller than the Calf of Man!

A SLIGHT QUESTION OF FACT.

It is never well for the public interest that the originator of any social reform should be soon forgotten. Further, it is neither wholesome nor right (being neither generous nor just) that the merit of his work should be gradually transferred elsewhere.

Some few weeks ago, our contemporary, The Pall Mall Gazette, in certain strictures on our Theatres which we are very far indeed from challenging, remarked on the first effectual discouragement of an outrage upon decency which the lobbies and upper-boxes of even our best Theatres habitually paraded within the last twenty or thirty years. From those remarks it might appear as though no such Manager of Covent Garden or Drury Lane as Mr. Macready had ever existed.

It is a fact beyond all possibility of question, that Mr. Macready, on assuming the management of Covent Garden Theatre in 1837, did instantly set himself, regardless of precedent and custom down to that hour obtaining, rigidly to suppress this shameful thing, and did rigidly suppress and crush it during his whole management of that theatre, and during his whole subsequent management of Drury Lane. That he did so, as certainly without favour as without fear; that he did so, against his own immediate interests; that he did so, against vexations and oppositions which might have cooled the ardour of a less earnest man, or a less devoted artist; can be better known to no one than the writer of the present words, whose name stands at the head of these pages.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOATED-SCHLOSS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

With a firmer and more rapid step, Magda recrossed the bridge, and passed under the portcullis once more. She would not return to the parlour. By her desire, Bettine conducted her straight to the tapestried room, which was now flooded with moonlight. She threw the window wide, and then, dismissing Bettine, she knelt down beside the great old-fashioned bed, and prayed—prayed for forgiveness of her many sins, poor little soul!—for courage to meet present trial, whatsoever it might be—for faith that should resist any devil's machination, and strength to overcome temptation. And to this was joined a fervent prayer that "unser Vater" would shield her Albrecht from all evil, and remove that dark and nameless cloud under which he suffered.

She rose and blew out the candles, which flared in the night breeze, and sent flickering shadows upon the tapestry. She did not need them to undress by, for the room was as light as day. She could see the faces of Ahasuerus and Esther in their royal robes on the wall opposite, with the black-bearded Mordecai, and the evil-eyed Haman hanging on the gallows, which last

was a ghastly image enough without the trembling light, by which the corpse appeared to be swaying to and fro.

It was warm; she would leave the window open all night; the moon was friendly; she could hear the wind stirring the topmost boughs of the forest yonder, where Albrecht was; and that was something. She had double-locked the door, and now she slid off the narrow quaint garment wherein she had been attired, and crept into the great black bed, which looked to her so like a grave, with its headstone and its garland in memory of the departed. The clock struck ten, as she lay down, and turned her face towards the window. The moon itself she could not see, though its light streamed in upon the floor; but there were spaces of clear sky, sprinkled with stars, across which the dusky shadow of a bat every now and then flitted. Except the hoarse croaking of the frogs, there was no other sign of life. For a long time she lay awake . . . she heard eleven strike, and then twelve . . . a prey to all manner of fancies. Now she thought that Esther stirred from her place upon the wall, and that she heard the rustle of her royal robes; now it was Ahasuerus who was stepping from his throne, and advancing to meet her; now Haman's dead limbs seemed to become animated, and the miscreant was descending from the gallows. But, one by one, these fancies wore themselves out. The woven figures came not to life; no sound, not even that of a mouse behind the wainscot, broke the perfect stillness of the night. The imagination, without aliment, cannot keep up for ever at high-pressure pitch; and when youth and health are in the other scale, nature will sooner or later have its way, and claim its right of rest. She fell asleep.

How long she remained so, she never knew; but she started from her sleep with the horrible consciousness that something was near her—something between her and the window—something bending over her, with its face close, close to hers. She lay there breathless, motionless. She tried to scream, to spring from the bed; she could not stir a muscle, and *the thing* stood there, immovable, with its glittering eyes looking down into hers. She knew she had been dreaming; she asked herself, in those few doubtful moments, whether this was a continuation of her nightmare? For, paralysed with terror as she was, strange to say, the deadly face of this shadow brought vividly to her mind the picture which had made so deep an impression on her at Prague. Though this was the face of a shadow, white and hollow, there were the same extraordinary eyes, unlike any Magda had ever seen. The rest was shrouded in black, and the moon from behind touched the edges of one white lock of hair with silver. "Louise!" murmured the shadow; and Magda felt a death-cold hand laid upon hers, outside the coverlet. She trembled so that the very bed shook under her, but she gave no other sign of life.

Lower and lower, closer and closer, bent the shadow. And now, indeed, Magda shut her eyes, and felt that life was ebbing fast from her heart; for the corpse-like face touched hers, and those dead lips rained kisses on her cheek. Then, with a great cry, as though something within her had snapped, Magda felt a sudden momentary power given her to spring from the bed, and run shrieking towards the window. It was but momentary; there was another shriek, the piercing echo of her own; she was conscious of the spectre's rushing towards her, white hair flowing, wild arms tossed into the sky; and then Magda sank in a swoon upon the floor.

Bettine was bending over her with salvolatile, when she opened her eyes. Hanne stood by the bed, whereon something black lay stretched.

"Mein Gott! sie ist todt!" were the first words Magda heard. They came from the lips of the grim Hanne. The door opened quickly at the same moment, and Magda found herself in Albrecht's arms.

But the next minute he turned towards the bed. Hanne and he interchanged looks; it was enough; and then, leaving Magda to Bettine's care, he ran towards the bed, and threw himself on his knees beside it. . . . Too late! too late! All his hope, then—his heart's first wish for years past—was now frustrated, at the very moment of fulfilment! He buried his head in the coverlid, and Magda heard a low sob. There was no other sound in the room. Then, after a while, she caught these disjointed sentences, wrung from the agony of the young man's soul:

"Du barmherziger Himmel! . . . Is it all over then? After so many years, so many!—without one kind look—without a word! It is hard. To go thus from me before the cloud was lifted. Ach! mutter—thou knowest now the truth—open thy lips, but once more—only once, to bless me, even me, thy only son, now

that I kiss thy dear hand after so many, many years!" And it was with a tender and sorrowful earnestness that Albrecht performed that simple act of German reverence.

But from the black bed, now more truly like a grave than ever, came no response, no sound, no sign that a living soul lay there; that the ear heard, or the heart felt the passionate adjuration addressed to it.

Magda, as she looked and listened, felt still so utterly bewildered that she could only keep asking herself whether it was not all a dream—whether, in truth, it was her Albrecht whom she saw and heard. Yet, at the window where she lay, the night, with its myriad stars, was gone; the pale opal light of morning was breaking in the east; she could even hear the soft dewy twitter of awakening birds. It was no dream; she could recal it all, the lonely, dreary evening, the terrible night—no, she was not dreaming, and that was her Albrecht, in the flesh, before her. But she felt an aching giddiness in her head; she raised her hand, and withdrew it, covered with blood. In falling she had struck herself, and, concealed by the masses of unrolled hair, the wound had escaped Bettine's attention. The old woman now ran to fetch the necessary means of staunching it, but the loss of blood had been considerable. Magda attempted to raise her head, but the room swam round with her; a film gathered across her eyes, and before Bettine's return, her young mistress had relapsed once more into unconsciousness.

Many hours after, in another and very different room in the schloss, a room surrounded with implements of the chase, the walls bristling with antlers, the polished floor pleasantly islanded with skins of deer and chamois, the young gräfin lay upon the jäger's bed, and her husband sat beside her. He had had her carried there, as being the most cheerful room in the house, and here he had been tending her, and (seeing her weak and excited condition) had enforced absolute silence, after her return to consciousness, and had answered her questions in monosyllables. But now, the day was far spent; the darkness, that season of feverish terror during which she had suffered so acutely twenty-four hours before, was at hand; it was well to tell her all, and to calm her mind by a knowledge of the truth. So there he sat, beside the little bed on which his young wife lay, holding her hand, and with a face on which could be clearly traced the impress of a recent and heavy trouble, he told her his story of the past in these words:

"It is all over now, my Magda—the mystery of our moated schloss—the hope and the despair of my life, which I dared not confide to thee; it is all over now. I can tell thee everything. . . . Why did I beseech thee to come here? What end was there to be gained by this? Listen. It is a sad enough story, which has embittered all my life, and the effects of which, in some sort, I shall carry to my grave. . . .

"Thou hast heard of poor Louise? She was my only sister, my senior by five years, and my mother's favourite, who doated on this daughter with an intensity which blinded her to every other object, and made her regard even me—strange as it may seem—in the light of an interloper, whose coming to divide the inheritance with her first-born was an injury and a wrong. My father, on the other hand, was very fond of me; but he died when I was nine; and for many years there was only Louise's sweet nature and her love for me to counteract the coldness and neglect of my poor partial mother. . . . God knows I never resented this. . . . I never ceased to love her; a kind word from her at any time made me as happy as a king . . . and I know *now* that even at that time, poor soul, her brain was in a measure diseased, and she was suffering under the chronic monomania which afterwards assumed an acute form.

"My sister occupied the tower where you slept last night; her sitting-room below, her bedroom above. A panel behind the arras, and a winding stair cut in the thickness of the wall, lead from these rooms to those that my mother inhabited. Thus she could visit her favourite child at all hours of the day and night without traversing the long corridor and public stair; and of this privilege she availed herself so constantly that I never knew her come to Louise's room by any other way.

"One evening, when I was about fifteen, I was in this room, plaguing my sister while she was dressing, by performing all manner of gymnastic feats, of which I was very proud, but which only alarmed her. At last, I bethought me of a water-pipe outside the window, which ran into the moat, and down which I thought it would be good sport to slide. Before Louise saw what I was about, I sprang on to the window-sill, and, clinging hold of the mullion with one hand, sought the pipe with the

other, and tried to fasten my feet around it. The operation was not an easy or rapid one, and before it was accomplished Louise, with a shriek of terror, had flown to the window, and was endeavouring to hold me back. But it was in vain her fragile fingers clutched me; I was resolved to succeed in my attempt; and now, indeed, I felt my feet were fastened round the pipe securely. Closer and closer I drew myself towards it, and further from the window, until, at last, I let go the mullion.

"Then it was that my poor sister, in her nervous terror, bent her whole body out of the window, and, stretching forth both hands, she lost her balance, and fell, with one wild scream, headlong into the moat below!

"Never, if I were to live a thousand years, can I forget that moment! How it was I managed to slide down the pipe, I scarcely know, now. I can just remember catching sight of my mother's awful face, and hearing her shrieks at the window; the next minute I was in the water, and striking out in the direction of something that floated near me.

"Half a dozen men were in the moat as soon as I was, and between them she was quickly brought to shore, and laid upon the bank; but, alas! the truth was evident at a glance; there could not be a doubt about it; she was dead. She had struck her head in falling, and death had mercifully been instantaneous. Would to God it had come to my poor, afflicted mother! . . . She had entered that room by the panelled door, at the very moment that Louise lost her balance and fell; and she lost her reason from that hour. It was Hanne who held her back when she would have thrown herself out after her idolised child. It was Hanne who again held her back when she rushed at me with an open knife. The dislike in which she had always held me was now fomented to positive hatred. She regarded me as the wilful murderer of Louise, and the mere mention of my name was enough to bring on a paroxysm of mania. The doctor decided at once that she must never be permitted to see me. I was sent away to college, and when, at rare intervals, I returned here, my presence never failed to rouse her out of her habitual condition of quiet harmless melancholy into one of ungovernable fury. Thus, for years past I have never been able to set my foot within these walls. The world has long believed my mother to be dead; the poor faithful servants here alone have tended and guarded their old mistress, seeing that she came to no harm, and keeping me regularly informed of the state of her health. She never left the schloss, but wandered to and from Louise's room, by day and night, folding and unfolding her child's clothes, looking at her books in a vacant way, and careful that every little article that had belonged to her should be kept in the very place where Louise left it. The servants told me that she never spoke of Louise as dead; she was always looking for her return. . .

"When I came to man's estate, my first object was to consult, either personally or by letter, all the most eminent surgeons in Europe who have devoted themselves to the study of insanity, as to my hapless mother's condition. There were several consultations, but little comfort came of them. All agreed, indeed, that such a condition was not absolutely hopeless. Cases had been known when, by powerfully affecting the heart upon the one subject which had caused madness, the brain had regained its equilibrium. But such cases were rare, and how, in my mother's case, was this end to be compassed? At last, Dr. ——, a man full of original expedients, said to me: 'Find, if you can, some girl who closely resembles what your sister was. . . . Introduce her into the schloss, as nearly as possible under the same circumstances as your sister . . . see what that will do. . . . It may open the sluices of all the poor lady's tender maternal feelings, and thus work a cure. Any way, it can do no harm. I will answer for it, she will not dislike, or try to harm the girl.' . . .

"To comprehend my intense anxiety on this subject, Magda, and the earnest longing wherewith I set about my search, thou must try and enter into my feelings during all these years. Not alone had I been the cause of my poor Louise's death, but also of this enduring and yet more frightful calamity, whereby my mother and I were living on in the world as strangers to each other. . . . It is hardly too much to say that my whole life was embittered by remorse . . . To feel her hand laid upon my head, to hear her say that she forgave me — this was the dearest hope I then had. . . .

"For many years my search was fruitless. I found fair-haired and gentle girls in abundance, but whenever I tried to trace the desired resemblance, it failed; either voice, or face, or manner, or the soul within, was utterly unlike Louise's. It is

rare, after all, to find any two human beings cast in moulds that are at all similar. . . . But, at length, my Magda, I found thee; and in thee, to my great joy, a living image of our lost Louise. . . . Shall I tell thee the truth? I had little thought of love or marriage, at first. Thy father was poor; I was willing to sacrifice two-thirds of my fortune to the accomplishment of my scheme; with that intention I sought thee. . . . But when I came to know thee, my treasure—ah! then it was different. When I came to see thee in thy quiet home, to note thy tender modest graces, Love found me out and conquered me. I thought, if thou wouldst consent to be my wife, here was the true solution of the difficulty. . . . and whether that scheme succeeded or failed, in thee I should, at all events, find a joy and peace that had long been absent from my soul. It has been so—it is so, my darling! The good God has seen fit to take my mother—has not seen fit to bless my original scheme. But he will bless what has grown out of it, that I know.

"I thought it best to conceal the truth from thee. When I brought thee and left thee here alone, it could but have added to thy alarms at first to know of an insane woman's presence in this dreary place, and of the part thou wert called upon to play. Thou wouldst learn it all, naturally, in the course of a day or two; but by that time some change might have been wrought in her condition. Of course I felt dreadfully anxious, yet I knew there was no danger to be apprehended. . . . Hanne has told me everything. From her window, my poor mother saw thee alight, and her eye kindled as she watched thee. All the evening she was strangely agitated, as they had not known her to be for years. By-and-by, on the bridge, she again watched thee stealthily; but could not repress a scream when the mantle fell over the parapet—it looked (Hanne says) from the window like a body falling into the water! Her excitement increased as night advanced; yet it seemed as though she doubted, and would test thy identity before approaching thee openly. Instead of going to Louise's room, as usual, every evening, she waited till night was fully come, when she stole up (followed by Hanne), and stood behind the arras, watching thee until thou wert asleep. Then she came forth, and touched thy clothes—the clothes that had been Louise's—and approached the bed softly, and stood looking tenderly upon thee. It was strange, Hanne says, to see the working of her face, and hear her muttered words, until, bending lower and lower, she touched thee with her lips, and whispered 'Louise!'

"This was the crisis. . . . How it might have ended, God knows! but for thy natural terror, my poor child, which made thee spring from the bed and rush screaming towards the window.

"No doubt, in the horror of the moment, it seemed to her, poor soul! that the old tragedy was being re-enacted—the scene whereon her mind had dwelt for twenty years rose up before her, and the mainspring of life, long worn, suddenly snapped. With a great cry, she fell back upon the bed, and died, almost instantaneously, I believe. . . .

"Peace be with her! God's decrees are wise, and in denying our prayers, He sometimes grants to us a yet better thing for our consolation," said the young graf in conclusion, as he pressed his wife to his heart.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. TAUNTON TO EXETER.

THE crow looking towards Exeter, turns a quick eye for a moment ere he rises from his last perch on St. Mary's tower, towards Norton Fitz-Warren on the Wolverton-road. On the hill side above the church there is an old earthwork with a ditch and two ramparts enclosing an area of thirteen acres. The local legend is that an enormous serpent, "the loathly worm" of the old ballads, once dwelt here and devastated the surrounding country. Its ravages are supposed to be portrayed in the carving of the wood screen in the adjoining church. Some say this place was once an old British town; there is a local distich:

> When Taunton was a furzy down,
> Norton was a market town.

It is in fact to Taunton what Old Sarum is to Salisbury—that is, grandfather. Perhaps some outlawed British chieftain of early days fortressed himself here, and tormented the neighbourhood by taking, unasked for, tithe and toll.

The crow glances also at North Curry, not far off, because North Curry is remarkable for being the only place that venerates the memory of that bad son, and infamous monarch, King John. Yet so strong is custom, and so indelible is the respect for the usurper at North Curry, that every Christmas John's "immortal memory" is drunk with all the honours. Let us hope that it was originally Saint John they toasted, and that the dinner only originated in a "church ale." The feast takes place at the Reeve's house, and the chief dish among the pastry is a huge mince pie, orna-

mented with a rude effigy of the ruthless murderer of Prince Arthur. Two candles weighing a pound each are lit, and until they are burnt out the visitors at this festive Dutch auction have a right to sit bemusing themselves with "jolly good ale and old." A marble tablet in the vestry room records the sacred customs to be observed on this occasion, but does not insist on inebriety.

A flight further westward and the crow feels the fresh wind from the Blackdown Hills ruffle the fan feathers of his strong wings. He rests at Wellington on a pleasant red roof and looks up at the Wellington monument. After Talavera, where Arthur Wellesley won his peerage, he chose the name of this town for his title, because his family is supposed to derive its name from Wellesleigh, a place near Wells, and this town is near Wensley, which sounds like Wesley, the name afterwards altered to Wellesley. On being made viscount the duke tried to purchase an estate here, but failed. In the civil wars the Wellington people were notorious Roundheads.

The crow has passed the frontier, and spreads his wings in sunny Devonshire air. Red Devons feed below him in the green meadows. Mossy apple boughs of countless orchards spread beneath him; homely cob walls square out the pastures; thatched cottages cheerily greet the eye.

On the honeycombed battlement of St. Peter's, the central church of the old clothing town of Tiverton, the crow first descends, lightly. This is one of those Devonshire towns that has suffered so much from fire, in consequence of the use of thatched roofs. In June, 1731, when the thatch had dried almost to tinder, a fire broke out in Tiverton, and destroyed at one fell swoop two hundred and ninety-eight of those picturesque, but dangerous, old thatched timber houses. Tiverton has produced at least one celebrated person, for Hannah Cowley, the authoress of the Belle's Stratagem, a lively and clever play that long held the Georgian stage, was born here in 1743. She was the daughter of Philip Parkhouse, a bookseller in the town, and she married an officer in the service of the Company.

The crow having rested on theatre roofs before now, has pleasure in the old clothing town between the Exe and Loman, in recalling snatches of the pleasant play by the bookseller's daughter, for was not Elliston the incomparable lover, the Doricourt at Drury Lane in 1815, Lewis the Doricourt at Covent Garden in 1780; Wrench, Flutter; and Mrs. Orger, the Lady Frances Touchwood; and is there not a stage tradition that Miss Younge, as Letitia, always burst into real tears when she took off the mask, in the last scene, and discovered herself to Doricourt? The feigned madness of Doricourt, and the feigned rusticity of Letitia, seem stale enough now, but they delighted audiences once, and Tiverton was proud of the play the royal family had commanded once a season for many years. In 1780 what could have brought the gallery down sooner than such expressive patriotic sentiments as those of Doricourt: "True. There I plead guilty; but I have never yet found any man whom I could cordially take to my heart and call friend, who was not born beneath a British sky, and whose heart and manners were not truly English?" Or, again: "Cursed be the hour—should it ever arrive—in which British ladies shall sacrifice to foreign graces the grace of modesty?"

That old church on which the crow rests, has a chapel and south porch carved all over with coats of arms, and ships, and woolpacks, and staple marks, by John Greenway, a cloth merchant in 1517, and has seen a good deal of fighting in its time. In the reign of Edward the Sixth, the Devonshire priests roused the commonalty in Devonshire, when Wiltshire and other counties began to rise. Ten thousand of them met under Humphrey Arundel, the Governor of St. Michael's Mount, armed themselves with bows, halberds, hackbuts, and spears, and despising Lord Russell's small force, moved on towards Exeter, carrying before them crosses, banners, holy water, candlesticks, the host covered with a canopy, and all the pomp of Catholic ritualism. Exeter shut her gates against them, they failed in all their attacks, and Lord Russell, reinforced by Sir William Herbert and Lord Gray, bore down at last on the fanatical peasantry with some rough German horse and prompt Italian arquebusiers. The battle was fought at Cranmore, near Collipriest. Tiverton saw that day the insurgents fly before the whirling two-handed swords of the fierce German mercenaries, and the Protector had soon good tidings from Devonshire.

In the civil wars Tiverton streets grew red again with blood freely spilt, for in 1643 the Parliament troops were chased out of it by Cavalier swords; in 1644 it was occupied in force by the king, first, and then by the Earl of Essex; and in 1645 Massey and Fairfax took it by storm. Fairfax, in his stolid way, soon dismantled the castle of the Earls of Devon, built by Richard de Redvers in 1100, and left only those ivied towers which the Carews and the crows now jointly possess; the great fourteenth century gateway still remains.

It was during the storm that Fairfax battered the church so much, the cavaliers having fortified themselves in it, dragged their guns on to the roof, and thrust their muskets out of every loop and window. It was then that the fine carved tombs of the Courtenays were trodden and struck to pieces. There was a monument to Catherine, the daughter of Edward the Fourth, and widow of an Earl of Devonshire, and another to the admiral, the third earl, generally called "the blind and good earl." His epitaph was one of those in which the corpse itself is supposed to talk to you:

> Hoe, hoe! who lies here?
> I, the good Earl of Devonshire,
> With Maud, my wife, to me full dere.
> We lyved together fyfty-fyve yere.
> What wee gave, wee have;
> What wee spent wee had;
> What wee lefte wee loste.

The old almshouses, for five poor men in Gold-street, were built by the same John Greenway who did so much for the church, and they are enriched in the same elaborate and quaint manner. They are quiet harbours for the last moorings of five old men, apart from the noise and conflict of the world. On the wall of the chapel are the lines:

> Have grace, ye men, and ever pray
> For the souls of John and Joan Greenway.

The eagle on a bundle of sticks (a nest), Greenway's device, is still to be seen here.

Tiverton is famous for its factory and its fifteen hundred lace makers. Devonshire was always famous for this human spider work, so graceful and so fragile. The famous Honiton pillow lace has been now superseded by cheap machine-made bobbin net; but machinery does not think as the hand does, and the result is far less refined and intellectual. Devonshire lace making was first introduced by fugitive Flemish protestants in the reign of Elizabeth.

A short flight lands the crow on to the Grecian portico of Silverton Park, not so much because the great Greek building belongs to the Egremont family, as because it enshrines that portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds, which the worthy Devonshire man painted in his honest pride and delight at being elected mayor of his native town—"an honour which he used to say had given him more pleasure than any other he had received during his life." His father had been master of the great school of Plympton. The corporation disgracefully sold this palladium of theirs to the fifth earl of Egremont for one hundred and fifty pounds.

A skim over the Egremont shrubberies brings the crow to Bickleigh Court, once a seat of the Carews; now only a farm house. The place recals a thousand legends, dear to schoolboy days, and not without some charm now, of that ingenious and half-crazed vagabond, Bamfylde Moore Carew, "the king of the beggars." Carew, the son of the rector of Bickleigh, was born seven years before the accession of Queen Anne. Bamfylde's scrapes began at Tiverton, where he led the stag hounds over some corn fields, and then ran away from school to avoid punishment. He joined some gipsies, and soon became conspicuous among them by his skill in disguise and begging, and his fondness for the wild, free, yet dissolute and lawless life.

Soon after being chosen king of the beggars, Carew was arrested at Barnstaple, sent to Exeter, and there, without trial, sentenced to transportation to Maryland for five years. At this time transported men were sold to the planters. Carew soon escaped from his master, and, flying to the woods, got among the Indians, and was helped by them on towards Pennsylvania. On returning to England, Carew, occasionally visiting his family in disguise, continued his career of beggar and small swindler, passing off as a shipwrecked sailor, broken-down farmer, or old rag woman; occasionally owning himself to friends of his family, and rejoicing quite as much in his own ingenuity and the success of his disguises as in the money he obtained. He is said, in old chap books, to have made money by successes in the lottery, and to have eventually returned to Bickleigh, and died there in 1758.

It seems remarkable how such a book as the Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew could ever have remained a popular chap book for a whole century; for, except his adventures among the Indians, and the narrative of his two transportations, the biography is little but a series of tricks to extort money. One day he was an old beggar woman laden with children, in her arms and on her back; the next day a burnt-out blacksmith, the day after a rheumatic miser. A mad Tom, a shipwrecked sailor, or a rat-catcher, Carew could assume any disguise at a moment's notice, always to the confusion of justices of the peace and the bleeding of the benevolent. The editor of one edition of the Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew thinks it necessary to defend his hero. "The morality of our hero," he says, apologetically, "is obvious in the various reflections he makes as he finds himself in different situations. His lessons are from the vast volume of nature; and though he passed but for a beggar, yet he *often* appears to have possessed every charm of the mind, and what is more worthy of praise—those better qualities of the heart, without which the others are but frivolous." Modern readers find in the rogue's adventures no trace of anything but promptitude and ingenuity.

A mile or two from Bickleigh the crow flits down to Cadbury Castle, on its isolated hill, where Romans once encamped, and which in 1645 Fairfax's army occupied. It looks across the Exe to another height called Dolberry, in Killerton Park. There is an old distich about these two hills:

> If Cadburye Castle and Dolbury Hill delven were
> All England might plough with a golden share.

The country people declare that a flying dragon, snorting and breathing fire, has been seen at night flying towards these two hills, guarding the great treasure hid in them by kings and warriors long dead. It is singular that there is another Dolberry on the Mendips, and that a rhyme almost similar gives hope of treasure there also. The time has no doubt come when a systematic investigation of all such localities as Dolberry should be made. The result would be in many cases as profitable as it would be interesting. From Cadbury many camps can be seen. They lie thick around Woodbury, Sidbury, Henbury, Dumpdon, Membury, and Castle Neroche, in Dorsetshire—all these the warriors of Cadbury may have wished to watch and supervise. The enclosure, with a circumference of about five hundred yards, has two fosses. In the first one there is a pit six feet deep, probably intended to collect rain water. It was excavated in 1848, and a curious finger ring, some gold bracelets, and styles for writing of late Roman character were found in it. They had been there for centuries within

reach of any spade; so treasures often lie unnoticed under our very feet.

Swift ply the black wings through the ebb and flow of the blue air, over the fine tower of Stockleigh Pomeroy, and the grand umbrageous trees of Shobrook Park, and the crow alights softly on the central tower of Crediton Church. "Kirton," says the local proverb, "was a town when Exeter was a mere range of furze and thorns," but ages ago ancient Britons, looking from Down Head, Posbury Hill, or Blackadown, saw houses clustering here beside the river Creedy. Anglo-Saxons, with axes at their belts, and spears in their hands, must have boasted, just as Kirton men now do, of the rich Lord's meadow of Sandford, and that of all the hay in Devonshire, there was no hay like Kirton hay, and of all Kirton hay, no hay like the hay of the Lord's meadow. In that broad pasture stretching down to the Creedy river the red Devons revel, as well they may, on the thick flowers and the fresh juicy grass.

Crediton was the birthplace of one of the greatest of the Saxon saints, Winfred—better known as St. Boniface—the first preacher of Christianity in central Germany, and the founder of the famous monastery at Fulda, in Hesse Cassell. This saint, educated at Exeter, travelled to Rome, received a commission from Pope Gregory the Second in 719, and then went as a missionary into Bavaria and Norwegia, and preached Christianity amid the forests to the half savage hunters of those early ages. On his return to Rome he was made first bishop to the Archbishop of Germany, still preaching among the wild tribes, and founding churches whenever the worshippers of Thor would permit him. He built the Abbey of Fulda, in 746, but, still untiring, bravely left his abatial splendour to plunge again among the savage Germans, and venturing into Friesland was slain with all his monks and cross bearers in the summer of 755. His works fill a dusty shelf still in old ecclesiastical libraries. Boniface was a great pioneer of civilisation among the German forests, and the fellow-countrymen of Luther owe him gratitude. This Devonshire martyr is the patron saint of innkeepers (probably in his travels the worthy man learned to value a good hotel, and on his return perhaps established an inn or two) and hence his worship by the class. For several hundred years after his martyrdom Crediton, then famous for woollen manufactures (now driven out by shoemaking), remained the seat of the Devonshire bishops.

In 1549, when the Roman Catholic peasantry broke out into rebellion, and bore the crucifix aloft through many a Devonshire town, the rebels gathering, too, at Crediton, built up a great barricade of carts, timber, and stones at the town's end, and fortified some barns adjoining. Sir Peter and Sir Jarvais Carew, riding from Exeter with a score or two of lances, desired to "have speech of the rebels," but, being denied access, dashed at the barricade, and either set the barns on fire, or compelled the rebels to burn them to prevent their being held against them. The rebels after this always took "the barns of Crediton" as their rallying cry.

The church at Crediton, in 1315, was the scene of one of those spurious miracles contrived in the middle ages to rouse the zeal of the country people. The bishops of Exeter used to reside here, and preside in the collegiate church over the stalls filled with stately rows of eighteen canons and eighteen vicars. In August, 1315, at the feast of St. Peter ad Vincula, while Bishop Walter Stapledon (afterwards torn to pieces by a London mob) was celebrating mass, a blind man, who had been praying far away from the splendour, glitter, and perfume of the central altar, before a side shrine of St. Nicholas, suddenly recovered his sight. Some temporary attack of ophthalmia had at last passed away. The cry of "a miracle! a miracle!" passed from worshipper to worshipper, till it reached the bishop, who instantly held a chapter in the Lady Chapel, proclaimed it as a bonâ fide miracle, and ordered the bells to instantly clash out a thanksgiving. The man was a fuller, of Keynsham, who had lost his sight in the previous Easter week, and had dreamt that he would be cured if he should visit the Church of the Holy Cross at Crediton.

In the south chancel aisle is the altar tomb of Sir John Sully, a knight who fought up and down Picardy, Saxony, and Spain, side by side with the Black Prince, and, in spite of storms of sword strokes, thousands of spear thrusts, rains of arrows, and many smashing experiences among maces and war hammers, lived till he was upwards of one hundred and five, and was then left here calmly to his rest; and on the north side of the chancel Sir William Peryam, a chief baron of the Exchequer of Elizabeth's time, sleeps near him.

Now to the ivied bastion of old Rougemont the crow bears right on, and from the ruined citadel of Exeter surveys the grand old cathedral, the great carved tomb of so many illustrious dead, and the twenty-one tributary parish churches. Julius Cæsar, who is said to have built the Tower of London, is reported to have set his hands to work at masonry here also. It is supposed that some of the Saxon kings next inhabited Rougemont, and issued from thence their fiery menaces to the rival potentates of Dorsetshire and Wiltshire, and the hostile Britons of Berkshire. Then came the Dukes of Cornwall, one of whom figures in King Lear, and of whom the less said the better, history being rather oblivious about that branch of the early English peerage. The rough conqueror came here, too, swearing his great oath, "Fulgore Dei," and beat at the gates of Rougemont. He altered the castle to show his power, and then gave it to the first Earl of Devon, the husband of his niece Albreda. In Stephen's troubled reign (one long battle indeed), the king attacked it, and burnt the outer works, and so tormented the garrison with fire that they had to empty all their wine

casks to help to extinguish the flames. In the reign of Henry the Fourth, John Holland, Duke of Exeter, dwelt at Rougemont, which is, however, chiefly interesting to the crow and his flighty friends from the fact that Shakespeare mentions a tradition concerning it.

The Crookback came here once with his army, and shuddered at being told the name of the castle, as an Irish prophet had predicted that he should not live long after seeing Richmond.

> Richmond! when last I was in Exeter,
> The mayor in courtesy showed me the castle,
> And call'd it Rouge-mont, at which name I started,
> Because a bard of Ireland told me once
> I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

Exeter, looking far away towards the warm green sea that beats upon Devon's red cliffs, was an old British town built long before Cæsar, and called Caer Isc, the city on the river. Antiquaries observe that like most Celtic trading towns it has been built for safety just beyond where the river ceases to be navigable. Coins of the Greek dynasties in Syria and Egypt prove that Phœnician merchants must have come here many hundred years before Christ to trade for Cornish and Dartmoor tin. Then the Romans marched in and made it a great station. Lastly the Saxons fortified the town on the Exe, and traded here with the Britons from across the Tamar. The Exe was the frontier then for the Damnonians, but Athelstan came and drove them pell mell into Cornwall, and rebuilt the walls of Exeter. The Britons cooped up among the granite rocks of Cornwall soon had their avengers; the Danes came crowding up the Exe with their black sails and black banners, and wintered at Exeter in 876, rejoicing in the Saxon beeves and ale. They grew accustomed to the place and pillaged it again under Sweyn in 1003. The old red tower was always getting beaten about by stones from military engines, and chipped by crossbow bolts. William the Conqueror besieged it, wishing to sieze Githa, the mother of Harold, and her daughter, but they escaped safely to Bruges. Perkin Warbeck, when joined by the Bodmin men, and calling himself Richard the Fourth, besieged Exeter, but unsuccessfully, and flying from the king's troops to Taunton, took refuge in the New Forest. Soon afterwards surrendering himself, but broke prison, and was hung at Tyburn.

Exeter had its share of troubles in the civil wars. Prince Maurice took it after an eight months' siege, and then it became the king's great stronghold in the west; for he was always popular in Devonshire and Cornwall, and the proud queen resided at Exeter, and kept the nobles loyal to the flag. There she gave birth to that princess Henrietta, afterwards the Duchess of Orleans, who was eventually poisoned, and on whom Bossuet preached one of his sublimest funeral sermons. The Prince of Orange made a formal entry into the fair capital of the west on his way to take possession of King James's crown, and in 1789 old King George and Queen Charlotte were received by the mayor and aldermen, to the delectation of the honest Devonshire people and the sardonic contempt of Peter Pindar. That sneerer, eventually so easily bought off, says:

> Mayster may'r, upon my word,
> Poked to the king a gert long sword,
> Which he poked back agen.

The journey to Exeter, now little more than five hours by express, used to take "old Quicksilver" seventeen or eighteen hours, with horses never off the trot. It was thought wild work at that rate, and our forefathers considered themselves desperadoes who had accomplished great deeds when they stepped out in Fore-street, and congratulated each other at the danger well over. In 1720 a Mrs. Manley, with the spirit of an African traveller, published a book on "A stage-coach journey from London to Exeter." The ponderous vehicle started at three in the morning, stopped at ten in order that the passengers might dine, and at three P.M. coolly retired into an inn-yard to safe moorings for the night. The journey was completed in four days, and the average pace was a safe cozy four and a half miles an hour.

The crow perched complacently in the gable niche of the west front of the grand old cathedral, nestling down, so that he seems a mere black spot from below—a mere black wafer at the feet of crumbling old St. Peter, looks down at the rows of angels, kings, and saints, and croaks applause at the piety of Edward the Third's lord high treasurer, Bishop Brantyngham, who, it is supposed, put together these Norman towers, flying buttresses, and lofty sheets of painted glass, all so many episodes of the great poem in stone, hallowed by the beauty of art.

Bishop Stapledon completed the choir in 1308 - 1326, and the four outermost bays of the choir are his also. His monument is in the choir. A figure of the Saviour is within the canopy, and a small figure of King Edward the Second climbs up towards him. The arms of the see (two keys addorsed) adorn the sleeve of the effigy. This bishop, who founded Exeter College, was left by Edward the Second in charge of London. In 1326, Stapledon, then Lord Treasurer of England, and a firm adherent of the king against the queen and the barons, met with a terrible death. When Isabella landed from France, determined to chase away the Spencers, her husband's favourites, and advanced on London, the weak king fled to the Welsh frontier. The bishop, as custos of the City of London, then demanded the keys of the Lord Mayor, Hammond Chickwell, and determined to curb the restless citizens, took high measures, ready to pounce on the first revolter. The populace equally alert, fearing the mayor's submission, and roused by Isabella's proclamations that had been hung on the new cross at Cheapside, rose in arms, imprisoned the mayor, and seized his keys. They then ran to Exeter House, in what is now Essex-street, Strand, burnt down the gates, and destroyed all the rich plate, jewels, money, and furniture. The

bishop, being at the time in the fields, though almost too proud to show fear, rode straight to the northern door of St. Paul's to take sanctuary. But it was too late. The mob closed round him, tore him off his horse, stripped him of his armour, dragged him, wounded and bleeding, to Cheapside, proclaimed him there a traitor, a seducer of the king, and an enemy of the people's interests, and, chopping off his head, set it on a pole. His disfigured corpse was tossed into a hole in the sand in an old churchyard of the Pied Friars. His brother and some servants were also beheaded, and their bleeding and naked bodies thrown on a heap of rubbish by the river side. The body of the luckless bishop was six months afterwards disinterred, and brought to Exeter for solemn and stately burial by the queen's command.

The towers and steeples of Exeter have many traditions the crow learns as he flits from one to the other, and on the lichened and corroded stones he croaks them in crow language to the chattering starlings, who respect him greatly for his blackness and his age.

Of St. Mary Major's, in the cathedral yard, it is said that the noise of the weathercock so disturbed Catherine of Arragon when she slept in the deanery on her way to London, that it was taken down. St. Mary Steps, in West-street, boasts an ancient clock with three quaint figures, which the townspeople call Matthew the Miller and his two sons (Matthew is really burly Henry the Eighth). The local rhyme about the old horologer's automata is,

> Adam and Eve would never believe,
> That Matthew the miller was dead,
> For every hour in Westgate tower
> Old Matthew nods his head.

If Exeter had been a Spanish city we should have had a hundred legends about these figures, the magicians who framed them and the goblins who haunted them. From one of the church towers, after the great rebellion of Edward the Sixth's time, one of the leaders, a vicar, was hung in his priestly robes.

Exeter is justly proud of her children. That humbly wise man, Richard Hooker, the author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, was born at Heavitree, which is a suburb. Tired of disputation, he only prayed to leave all public employment and retire to some quiet parsonage, where he might, to use his own beautiful language, "see God's blessings spring out of the earth and eat his bread in peace and privacy." One of his friends found him, tormented by his shrew of a wife, rocking a cradle while busy studying the Greek Testament. Sir Thomas Bodley, the founder of the great Oxford Library, was another worthy son of Exeter. Gandy, the painter, whom Reynolds imitated and whom Kneller admired, was a third. Budgell, Addison's friend, is also on the roll, and Jackson, the composer—Incledon's master. When Incledon was ragingly jealous of Braham he used to say,

"If my dear old master could only come down from heaven and take an Exeter post-chaise, and come up to town and hear this condemned Jew, he'd soon settle the matter."

The crow lifting from the Exeter roof, now bears swift away to the Tamar and the granite strewn and haunted moors of Cornwall.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XV.—*Continued.*

ELEVEN O'CLOCK, P.M.—Heaven is very good—too good to me. I go to bed more cheerful. Something drew me into those vile rooms after my wandering about miserable and purposeless; indeed it was to escape from myself during those weary hours. I felt a sort of thrill and sinking at my heart. I drew near and looked at the fatal table; it was another *winning* night, and every one in spirits and excitement, and picking up gold and silver. My trembling fingers were really drawn by an overpowering instinct to my pocket, and, literally without my knowledge, I found I had my only stake in my hand ready to put down. Then there was a new combination. I remarked there was an alternation, a zigzag going backwards and forwards, and taking advantage of this, I was impelled irresistibly to put down. I won, and breathed. I won again, and went on, and have now got back six out of my ten. O, God is very good—too good! I meet Grainger going out.

"Well done," he said. "I saw you, though I did not wish to show myself, for fear of making you nervous. Your moves were bold, and worthy of a general, and your retreat just in time."

"To-morrow I know I shall get back the rest, perhaps more. Even a few louis more would be something, but I should be quite content."

I went back again.

One o'clock P.M.—As I went out of the Kursaal down the steps on to the terrace, I could hardly keep myself from giving a cry. My heart so light, so airy, so bounding, so full of hope. I had to walk round and round those gardens before I could trust myself to sit down calmly, and take out what I had in my pocket. O my sweet darling pieces, there they are on the table before me, all come home to me again, rescued from the vile harpies who would destroy us all, wreck the happiness of families for a single double florin. Let me look again, and set them out on the table before me, eight, nine, ten. Then, again, one, two, three, four, five, and five double florins,

which make six louis, and nearly another louis in single florins, nearly seven louis profit. Nearly the sixth of our rent. O, Heaven is good—too good to me. I do not deserve such bounty; for only think what it would have been had I lost all that! What would have been my state of agony and despair! Safe, rescued, restored, I have done with them now for ever, for ever. Ministers of Mephistopheles, you did your best with me, but you have come out of the fight rather the worse, I think. You had nearly been successful, but you will not find us *all* victims. Some of us are your match. I feel so well and happy, I shall feast royally, that is, treat myself to a little bottle of Hockheimer. I have been so low, I want it.

To-day has quite an air of a festival. I see the singing Diva. The little lady with the marble face and projecting chin is singing, and I think after my victories two or three florins' worth of sweet music will be welcome. I so love music, though not this opera. I had wished for the melodious Traviata, often promised and denied by this tricky administration. To-night it is Crispino, a sparkling little comic opera, full of pretty tunes, and well suited to the tricks and caprices of the little lady whom we call a Diva, for the lack of a better one. I must say I am a little dazzled by what the administration have done in the way of a theatre. A more gorgeous and elegant little temple of its size it would not be possible to frame. Well filled, charming dresses, and elegant people. I see near me, in the stalls, a little party whom I have noticed often; a young girl, so strangely like my Dora at home, that it makes me start; the same rich dark hair, the same refined turn in the face, the same look of sparkling gaiety and enjoyment which was Dora's attraction, with large heavy Italian earrings that seemed almost Indian in shape. A dull Englishman beside her talked and whispered the whole time, and prevented her attending to the music — I dare say thought he was recommending himself vastly. I could wish she had snubbed him as he deserved. I am in such spirits and shall go out now, have a cup of coffee and chocolate, and then walk about the gardens in the balmy night air, looking up at the illuminated terrace. I have grown quite fond of that pacing up and down in these gardens so late. Such dreams and speculations have floated before me there as I look up to the calm and placid sky over the trees!

I can almost smile at myself and my *awful* state yesterday. I am far too sensitive, and I am sure if any of these good and proper people here—had they lost money even that did not belong to them—would take it quietly enough. Their withers would not be wrung on such provocation, and they would make some complacent excuses to themselves. Some would say I was scrupulous, too scrupulous; which would be according to their imperfect lights. How can they tell, or what can they know? I pierce deeper, and can tell them it was another matter, some thousand miles away, I was thinking of. It was my Dora and home that was present to me—her dear letter and distresses. "A dark cloud," she wrote, in her graphic style, "which will pass away." This was what was overshadowing me. This unselfish motive, as indeed, without vanity, I may call it. I was not thinking of a trumpery loss, and of such poor contemptible enemies, whose game is in my hands, and who are almost children to me at their own weapons and machinery, which take in a few fools, and them only. And, by the way, how curious the analogy here, even to morals and virtue. What a testimony to the great and good advice, which so often goes in at one ear and out at the other, not to be dispirited at a reverse, but "bide your time." Even to their debasing chicanery that golden rule applies. Valuable lesson, indeed; though I had a distinct idea there could be no doubt about it. There is a uniformity in all these dispensations which applies *universally*; and thus, à la Jaques, we find good in everything.

What a thing the sense of power is! Poor "huckaback" minds of the common cheap pattern, never can look beyond the immediate moment. Defeat or repulse for a time is with them defeat for ever. *They* cannot understand the masterly policy of retreat preparatory to an advance—the "reculer pour mieux sauter." The timid and ignorant dabbler in the funds sells on a fall; the spirited speculator holds and buys more. So with your common vulgar players, who fly disheartened by a loss. The rascals who hold the tables know this well. They thought *I* would have done the same. I am tempted to try and give them a lesson once and for ever. It would be a bit of triumph to show them *my* skill fairly, and I do not see that I am bound to show them any quarter. They would have shown *me* none yesterday. Our government gives the criminal no quarter, and takes his spoil from him. I dare say when I

go home and tell my story, I shall have to meet reproaches, and even a wounded surprise from Dora. "If you could *do* all this I think a few pounds for our pressing necessities could have been no great sin." No great sin! Certainly not, my pet; and your gentle soul is scarcely trained enough to appreciate these niceties. The example is something; but you would hardly follow me if I said that by way of *punishment* to them it would be no such harm.

With light heart I went in again. I saw a ruefulness and distrust in the pinched face of M. B. He knew that I knew him and his ways. He knew, too — for these men note the most trifling incidents of the day—that I had got back from them everything they had tricked me out of, and more. I could see the mortification in his eyes. Studying the game more carefully, it is amazing what fresh lights and instincts break in on me. If I had but time I could develop the whole into a science, whose certainty and accuracy would be assured. But your pedant, even if he knew its rules, would infallibly break down; because, like the skilful general, there are moments when you must fling away rule and trust to instinct—a glorious instinct, quite as infallible. I felt it all today, and scarcely ever was at fault. The strangest "power" I see is that of Zero, and there is one man present, who I admit, *has* some of this instinct with a true knowledge of the laws and seasons that relate to this Zero. I see too plainly the most amazing results could be obtained. I am half provoked with myself for not obeying the silent supernatural invitations I received a dozen times to-day—it is like flinging away the blessings of nature, ever bountiful. If they challenge me in this way so persistently —well, before I go, a few minutes—as an experiment——

Midnight.—O wretched, miserable, weak fool, I deserve it all, every bit of it! It was blind, cursed folly, and madness! O, what is to become of me *now?* All gone! All this money—I don't know how much, and what does it matter now? O, I must hold my very heart—I cannot breathe. O wicked, wicked, vile *scoundrel!* What am I to do? Nothing left—all gone—and I cannot fly from this place! O den of thieves and worse than murderers, you have undone me at last! Let me see, now, let me turn out these pockets. Yes, five, six florins, and three wretched kreutzers; and one—yes, and another—just two napoleons left. O you fool, you base, mean, pitiful scoundrel! What *is* to become of me now? Their devilish seduction—letting me win at first, then a little loss, and that desperate doubling to get all back! My brains, my wits, all fled, and I saw nothing but the cursed green board. If I had had a hundred more it must have followed, for it was a necessity I should get it back. O, it will never come back, and I am ruined and disgraced for ever. Let me die. I cannot show my face.

Thus the whole of that day went by—I, with a sort of restless demon locked up in me, which would not allow me to remain quiet three minutes in one position. If I sit for a few minutes, flutter, flutter, begins every nerve in my whole system. My heart throbs as if from machinery, and the only thing, it seems, that can save me, is to leap up and walk—walk furiously, in any direction. Passing by objects swiftly, —trees, men, and women—*that* gives me a relief, that headlong motion disturbs the beat of the pendulum, and whirling wheels. I have not time to think from the physical action. Oh, such a long, long day! O the leaden wings of the hours dragging on like the foreshadowed eternity! . . . I dared not go near that terrible red-stone palace. I shrank from it as from a burning furnace, whose glow spread for half a mile round—from itself, from its gardens, from the very look, seen so far off. I was carrying the raging glowing embers of a stove within me. Oh, the miles I paced up and down and round those streets, something drawing me, and I struggling against the influence, to the red sandstone palace.

But at last the noon was past—the evening came; and then I knew the lamps had been brought in *there*, and the true business begun. The brigands and ruffians who had stopped me and pillaged me, had other prey now. Oh, those hours!—then the night! . . .

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read at St. James's Hall, London, February 16; Glasgow, February 18; Edinburgh, February 19; Glasgow, February 22; Edinburgh, February 24; Glasgow, February 25; Edinburgh, February 26; St. James's Hall, London, March 2; Wolverhampton, March 4; Manchester, March 6 and 8; Hull, March, 10; York, March 11; Hull, March 12.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER II. LADY CAROLINE.

THE LADY CAROLINE liked late hours. She was of a restless temperament, and hated solitude, though she was also intolerant of anything like dulness in her associates, and had sufficient taste for the accomplishments which she possessed to render her independent of society. Nevertheless she underwent an immense deal of boredom rather than be alone, and whenever she found herself in a country house, she set to work to form a coterie of late sitters, in order to avoid the early hours which were her abhorrence. She was not an empty-headed woman — far from it. She had a good deal more knowledge than most women of her class, and a great deal of appreciation, some native humour, and much of the kind of tact and knowledge of society which require the possession and the exercise of brains. Nobody would have pronounced her stupid, but every one agreed that she was supercilious and superficial. The truth was that she was empty hearted, and where that void exists, no qualities of head will fill it; and even those, who do not know what it is they miss in the individual, are impressed by the effect of the deficiency. The Lady Caroline loved no one in the world except herself, and sometimes she took that solitary object of affection in disgust, which, if transient, was deep. She had arrived at Westhope in one of these passing fits of ennui, mingled with impatience and disgust of herself, and irritation with everybody around her. She never at any time liked Westhope particularly, and her brother and his wife had no more interest for her, no more share in her affections, than any other dull lord and lady among the number of dull lords and ladies with whom she was acquainted. Her brother loved her rather more than other people loved her, and Lady Hetherington and she, though they "got on" charmingly, knew perfectly well, that the very tepid regard which they entertained for each other, had nothing in it resembling sympathy or companionship.

When the Lady Caroline retired to her own rooms after the dinner party at which Walter Joyce had learned the news from Woolgreaves, she was no more inclined than usual to try the efficacy of a "beauty" sleep; but she was much less inclined to grumble at the dulness of Westhope, to wish the countess could contrive to have another woman or two whom she might talk to of an evening, and who would not want such a lot of sleep to be resorted to so absurdly early, and to scold her maid, than usual. The maid perceived the felicitous alteration in her ladyship's mood immediately. It made an important difference to her. Lady Caroline allowed her to remove all her ornaments and to brush her hair without finding fault with her, and surprised the patient Abigail, who must have had it "made very well worth her while" to endure the fatigues of her office, by telling her she should not require her any longer, and that she was sure she must be tired. Left to herself, the Lady Caroline did not feel so impatient of her solitude as usual, but fell into a reverie which occupied her mind completely. We have seen this nobly-born and, in some respects (chiefly external), highly-gifted woman as she appeared among her brother's guests. While she sat by the fire in her dressing-room— with which she never dispensed, at any

season, in "the odious English climate," as she was wont to call it—let us look into her life, and see her as she really was.

Lady Caroline Mansergh had married, or rather, her mother had married her to, a gentleman of considerable importance, wealth, and more than mature years, when she was just seventeen. Very fair and very sweet seventeen, whom it had been somewhat difficult to convince of the delights and advantages of being "an old man's darling." But Lady Hetherington had not accustomed her children to gentle or affectionate treatment, or to having their inclinations consulted in any way. She no more recognised Lady Caroline's right to choose her own husband than she would have consulted her taste in her babyhood about her own sashes; and the girl's feeble attempt at remonstrance, in opposition to the solid advantages of the proposals made by Mr. Mansergh, did not produce the least effect at the time. Her ladyship carried her point triumphantly, and the girl found her fate more endurable, on the whole, than she had expected. But she never forgave her mother, and that was rather odd, though not, when looked into, very unreasonable; Mr. Mansergh never forgave her either. The countess had accomplished his wishes for him, the countess had bestowed upon him the wife he coveted, but she had deceived him, and when he won his wife's confidence he found her mother out. He had not been so foolish as to think the girl loved him, but he had believed she was willing to become his wife—he had never had a suspicion of the domestic scenes which had preceded that pretty tableau vivant at St. George's, Hanover-square, in which every emotion proper to the occasion had been represented to perfection. Fortunately for Lady Caroline, her elderly husband was a perfect gentleman, and treated her with indulgence, consideration, and respect, which appealed successfully to her feelings, and were rewarded by a degree of confidence on her part, which ensured her safety and his peace in the hazardous experiment of their unequal marriage. She told him frankly all about herself, her tastes, her feelings—the estrangement, almost amounting to dislike, which existed between herself and her mother—the attempt she had made to avoid her marriage; in short, the whole story of her brief life, in which there had been much to deplore. Mr. Mansergh possessed much firmness of character and good sense, which, though it had not preserved him from the folly of marrying a girl young enough to be his daughter, came to his aid in making the best (and that much better than could have been expected) of the perilous position. Lady Caroline did not, indeed, learn to love her husband in the sense in which alone any woman can be justified in becoming the wife of any man, but she liked him better than she liked any one in the world, and she regarded him with real and active respect; a sentiment which she had never entertained previously for any one. Thus it fell out, contrary to the expectations of "society," which would have acted, in the aggregate, precisely as Lady Hetherington had done, but which would also have congratulated itself on its discernment, and exulted hugely, had the matrimonial speculation turned out a failure, that Lady Caroline Mansergh was happy and respectable. She never gave cause for the smallest scandal; she was constantly with her husband, and was so naturally, unaffectedly, cheerful and content in his company, that not the most censorious observer could discover that he was used as a shield or a pretence. There was a perfectly good understanding between Mr. Mansergh and his young wife on all points, but if there was more complete accord on one in particular than on others, it was in keeping the countess at a distance. The manœuvring mother profited little by the success of her scheme. To be sure she got rid of her daughter at the comparatively trifling expense of a splendid trousseau, and the unconsidered risk of the welfare and the reputation of the daughter in question; and she had the advantage over the majority of her friends of having married her advantageously in her first season! But the profit of the transaction terminated there. In her daughter's house Lady Hetherington remained on the same ceremonious footing as any other visiting acquaintance, and every attempt she made either to interfere or advise was met by a polite and resolute coldness, against the silent obstinacy of which she would have striven unsuccessfully had she not been much too wise to strive at all. If the barrier had been reared by Lady Caroline's hands alone, though they were no longer feeble, the countess would have flung it down by the force of her imperious will, but when she found that her daughter had her husband's opinion and authority to back her, Lady Hetherington executed the strategic movement of retreat with celerity and

discretion, and would never have been suspected of discomfiture had she not spoken of her daughter henceforth with suspicious effusion. Then "society" smiled and knew all about it, and felt that Mr. Mansergh had been foolish indeed, but not immoderately, not unpardonably so. Lady Caroline was very popular and very much admired, and had her only friend's life been prolonged for a few years, until she had passed the dangerous period of youth, she might have been as worthy of esteem and affection as she was calculated to inspire admiration. But Mr. Mansergh died before his wife was twenty-three years old, and left her with a large fortune, brilliant beauty, and just sufficient knowledge of the world to enable her to detect and despise its most salient snares, but with a mind still but half educated, desultory habits, and a wholly unoccupied heart. Her grief for her husband's loss, if not poignant and torturing, was at least sincere, deep, and well founded. When he died, she had said to herself that she should never again have so true, so wise, and so constant a friend; and she was right. Life had many pleasant and some good things in store for Lady Caroline Mansergh, but such a love as that with which her husband had loved her was not among them. She acknowledged this always; the impression did not fade away with the first vehemence of grief—it lasted, and was destined to deepen. She strayed into a bad "set" before long, and to her youth and impulsiveness, with her tendency to ennui, and her sad freedom from all ties of attachment, the step from feeling that no one was *so* good as her husband had been, to believing that no one else was good at all, was very easy. And so Lady Caroline acquired a dangerous and demoralising trick of contempt for her fellows, which she hid under a mask of light and careless good nature indeed, and which was seriously offensive to no one, but which condemned her, nevertheless, to much interior solitude and dreariness. That she was not *of* the world she lived in, was due less to any exceptional elevation of sentiment than to a capricious and disdainful humour, which caused her to dismiss her associates from her thoughts after a brief scrutiny, in which their follies and foibles came into strong light, and the qualities which would have required time and patience to find out remained undiscovered.

It had occurred to Lady Caroline Mansergh, on several occasions of late, to wonder, whether she was destined ever to experience the passion called love. She had not remained ignorant of the science of flirtation up to her present time of life, but, she had not been beguiled, ever so briefly, into mistaking any of her flirtations for love. So she was accustomed to wonder wearily, when in an unusually desultory mood, whether she should ever feel that there existed in the world a human being for whom she should be willing to suffer, with whom life would be happy, without whom it would be intolerable, and whose welfare she could deliberately and practically prefer to her own. Of late she had begun to think that fate was against her in this particular. The idea of the possibility of feeling love for one of the men whom she was in the habit of meeting, was quite preposterous; she did not hold her favourite followers half so dear as Jehui, her black barb, or like them half so well as Gelert, her greyhound. Her life would, doubtless, continue to be the bright, fashionable, flimsy, careless, rather ennuyé existence it had hitherto been, and she should never know anything of the power, the pain, the engrossing influence of love. So much the better, she would think, in her more hopeful moods; it must be a narrowing kind of influence, bounding all one's horizon within such small limits, shutting up one's mortal vista with one figure.

When the Lady Caroline dismissed her maid, and resigned herself to reverie, on this night, it was not, after her accustomed fashion, to dwell in her thoughts on the dulness, staleness, flatness, and unprofitableness of the world in general, and the section of it in which she lived, in particular. She had quite a distinct subject for thought, she had a figure and a face in her fancy, a voice in her memory, which filled them wholly. What if she had been wrong, if not only love were coming to her, to fill her life with delight, and turn its weariness with purpose and meaning, but love at first sight? A ridiculous notion, entertained by schoolgirls, housemaids, novelists, and poets, but scouted by all reasonable people of the world, and "in society." She knew this, but she did not care; there was a strange delicious thrill about her heart, and in the swift flight of her thoughts she swept the beams of happy possibilities, and felt that she could, and would, and did despise society and its notions on this point.

What did she know about Walter Joyce? Absolutely nothing, but that he was young,

handsome, brightly intelligent, presumably poor, and socially insignificant, or he would not be her silly brother's secretary. Her attention had been directed to him at first, because she felt a compassionate curiosity about the person whom circumstances had oppressed so cruelly as to oblige him to purvey ideas, and language in which to express them, for Lord Hetherington. Curiosity and compassion had been replaced, within a few minutes, by admiration; which the difference between the manners and bearing of Walter, and those of the men with whom she was accustomed to associate, rather tended to increase. There was no awkwardness about Walter, but neither was there the slightest pretence. He was at ease in the unaccustomed company he found himself among, but he did not affect to be other than an observant stranger in it.

"He has an intellect, and a heart," said Lady Caroline, half aloud, as she rose from her seat by the fireside, and brought her reverie to a conclusion, "and why should I care for the world's opinion? It could not make me happy, if I conciliated it; but I think *he* could, if I defied it for his sake."

LIGHTING.

It is scarcely credible what time and trouble have been expended, on the invention of even the least of the appliances of modern comfort. There is not a single object among the many we daily use, without asking whence or how they came to us, which has not passed through an infinity of stages before arriving at its state of present perfection. And when we reflect on the slowness of the march of progress, and on the toughness of the struggle that new inventions are condemned to make before being adopted by the public, we cannot help looking back with a feeling of thoughtful pity upon what are called the "good old times," and wonder how our forefathers could find their lives endurable, with so little of ease and pleasure to enliven them.

Is it easy to believe, for instance, that the world groped on to the thirteenth century, without discovering such a simple thing as a tallow candle? Yet so it is. We use no metaphor when we say that, during the early ages, mankind was plunged in darkness. The expression is true in every sense.

The first light known was obtained from branches of resinous wood, employed as torches. But the invention of lamps followed very closely upon this primitive discovery. As soon as men found out the inflammable properties of fat, they turned it to account by sticking a rush into a vessel filled with lard; and this spitting, sputtering, and flickering contrivance was handed down, from father to son, as the sole dispeller of darkness, until it occurred to some fanciful spirit to invent oil. Of course this new liquid was at once substituted for fat, by all who could afford it. And it is probable that it was about the same time, that flaxen and hempen wicks were first used instead of rushes, by the same class of well-to-do people. All the antiquities that we possess prove, beyond doubt, that the Indians, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Israelites, the Greeks, and the Romans, to say nothing of a great many other people of whom we know next to nothing, were acquainted with the use of oil lamps. Admirable specimens of lamps, in bronze, stone, and brass, have been found in the pyramids, in the ancient temples of Hindustan, and on the sites of Jewish cities. As regards the lamps of Greece and Rome, we have ample means of judging what they were, from the excavations made at Pompeii. Gold, silver, marble, precious stones; nothing was thought too expensive to ornament these vessels. The greater number of them are marvels of artistic workmanship, and even the humblest terra-cotta specimens that were used by the poor in cottages, have a gracefulness of shape, and an elegance of finish, that no craft of modern times could surpass.

But it must not be supposed, for all their beauty and all the expense bestowed on their fashioning, that these antique lamps were of any great use for practical purposes. An eighteen-penny lantern with its tin reflector, and its bull's-eye of third-rate glass, diffuses a better light than did any of the costly apparatus of Rome or Egypt. The ancients knew no method of refining oil. As a great luxury they mixed it with perfumes, such as essence of rose and sandal-wood; but this rather detracted from, than added to, the burning properties of the liquid; and all that was obtained by the process was an increase of fragrance and a diminution of light. The dwellings of wealthy men like Verres, Mecænas, and Lucullus, who expended extravagant sums upon scented oils, would not have borne comparison in point of lighting, with the grimiest tap-room of a gas-lit public-house. The gold and silver lamps, hung by slender well-wrought chains to marble pilasters, only yielded at their best, a lurid tapering flame that gave out an enormous deal of smoke, fluttered in the slightest breeze, and went out altogether at a gust of wind. Neither was it possible to steady the light, by closing the apertures through which the air came; for, had Roman or Grecian houses been possessed of glass windows, they would soon have become uninhabitable. The fresco paintings of Pompeian villas, the delicate colours on the walls of urban palaces, would in less than a month have been hopelessly coated with lamp soot. At the end of an hour's conference, of an evening, a party of noble Romans would have resembled a congregation of chimney-sweeps. A tunic dyed in Syrian purple would have acquired a mourning hue in no time.

From Rome, the oil lamp passed successively into Lower Germany, Gaul, and Britain; in all

three of which nations torches, and rushes dipped in fat, were the only methods of lighting known, until the Roman conquest. The Picts and Scots, the Danes, and the tribes of Scandinavia, were even not so far advanced in their mode of illumination. They were not acquainted with the rushlight. When torches were wanting, they stuck a bit of wood into the carcase of a fat bird, and, supporting the stench as best they might, allowed this dismal sort of candle to burn until the bird became a cinder. Travellers in Lapland and Iceland, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, observed that this way of lighting was still common among such of the natives as were too poor to buy oil.

The lamp, as brought from Rome, continued in use, without being in any manner modified, until the time when candles were invented. This will explain how it was that our ancestors kept such early hours. During all the mediæval ages, men rose at daybreak, and went to bed at about the time when now-a-days we set off for the theatre. The curfew bell, which tolled at eight o'clock under the reign of William the Conqueror, to warn citizens to put out their fires and lights, was not such an oppressive institution as most of us have supposed in our school-boy days. It was not imposed upon the conquered English as a sort of punishment, nor to prevent factious people from meeting by night, as many people have supposed. It was a police regulation, as we should now call it: nothing else. It was promulgated in the same spirit as the modern rules in our barracks and prisons, which prescribe the extinguishing of all lights at ten o'clock, to diminish the danger of fire. Under the name of couvre-feu (from whence curfew is derived) the law had been in use in France long before it crossed over to England; and the appalling catastrophes that always resulted in those days, whenever a fire broke out, furnished sufficient reason to render its strict observance eminently necessary. Besides, as we have said, the badness of the lamps and the early hours that were kept in consequence, rendered the edict a grievance to no one. In summer time, people who had been up since four o'clock in the morning, were not sorry to go to sleep at sunset; and in winter there was very little pleasure in sitting up in a dusky hall, to be smoked black by a flickering lamp. As for the poor, the question of economy was the best of all curfews in their case; oil was too expensive for any but people of means.

The first step towards the invention of candles was taken in the twelfth century, when tallow torches came into use. A hundred years later, the tallow candle, pretty much as it exists now, made its first appearance, and was deemed so great a luxury that only people of real wealth could afford to buy it. The haughty barons who forced King John to sign Magna Charta would, probably, have considered a parcel of tallow dips as a most welcome present at Christmas time; and to have stolen one of these precious luminaries, or only the end of one, from a kitchen dresser, would have been to incur the noose without any hope of pardon. It was not until the fifteenth century, that burgesses and tradespeople were enabled to purchase candles. The price had become somewhat lower by that time. The cost of one candle (they were sold singly until the present century) was about sixpence of modern money; and for this sum, one had the wherewithal to escape darkness, for half an hour. For it must be remembered that the primitive dips differed from those now in use, in two points; firstly, in the fact that the tallow was not refined, and secondly, in that the wicks continued, in most instances, to be of flax. Cotton was more expensive than silk in those days. A pair of cotton stockings cost sixty shillings. And, under the circumstances, it would have seemed an extravagant folly to burn cotton wicks elsewhere than in palaces. On the other hand, the flaxen wicks acted very ill; there was always a great deal of trouble in lighting them, and when once the feat had been accomplished, they burned at such a terrific rate, that they melted half the tallow without consuming it. This last fact gave rise to a quaint form of economy. Instead of casting the drippings of the tallow candles into the fire, as now-a-days is done, every scrap was saved, and when two or three pounds had been collected the chandler bought them back, at so liberal a rate, that the drippings of four candles afforded the price of a new one.

Some half century or more after the invention of tallow candles, wax lights were introduced into a few palatial residences. Wax tapers had been in use in churches in the ninth century, but their cost had been so far beyond the limits of ordinary purses, that no one would have dreamed of wasting his money upon such an expensive article. The offering of a wax taper to a chapel or a shrine, was looked upon throughout the middle ages as a princely gift. A man who presented a taper weighing a pound, to his parish priest, was certain of receiving absolution; and, as every one knows, it was customary to vow a taper to the Virgin Mary, in the same way as the ancients vowed a hundred doves to Venus, or a white heifer to Juno. As a first attempt to pacify Thomas a'Beckett, Henry the Second sent two wax tapers weighing twenty pounds each to the cathedral at Canterbury, and this munificence cost him four hundred crowns of gold. When Richard the First returned to France after his release from captivity, he bestowed the first five hundred crowns he could obtain, in buying tapers for the church of Fontevrault; and Louis the Eleventh, during his reign of one-and-twenty years, spent a perfect fortune in candles for "Our Lady of Grace." Now-a-days, the practice of burning tapers as peace-offerings, or sin-offerings, still prevails in the Roman Catholic church. Two years ago, on the occasion of the Prince Imperial's illness, the Empress Eugénie went in person to offer a taper at the Virgin's shrine of Nôtre Dame. But the existing custom must be looked upon as merely a pale reminiscence of what

it was in former times. The fall in the price of wax has entailed a diminution in the value of the sacrifice. The gift of a taper can no longer procure absolution.

The cost of wax lights continued to be exceedingly high until the sixteenth century. Up to that time there were very few wax tapers burned, even in king's palaces, except on extraordinary occasions. About the period of the Tudors, the price diminished sufficiently to allow monarchs and very rich noblemen to adopt this method of lighting; and in the year 1509 the idea occurred to certain chandlers, of mixing animal fat with wax, and forming a cheaper "composite." For some unaccountable reason, however, a royal edict put an abrupt stop to the development of this new invention. Perhaps it was that fraudulent dealers (there seems to have been no lack of them, even in "the good old times"), had passed off the composite candles for genuine wax, and so wrought scandal in the land, or perhaps it was simply that the new discovery threatened to prove a dangerous competition to the real wax trade, of which some mighty noble, according to the fashion of the day, had a monopoly. But whatever may have been the reason, the invention came to nought.

It is a well-known circumstance, that Oliver Cromwell once blew out one of two wax candles, that he found burning simultaneously on his wife's work-table. This excellent man—who amidst all the cares of state, ever kept a shrewd eye to his own affairs—had probably remarked in his grocer's bill that wax tapers (of the size we now call "fours"), cost five-and-thirty shillings the dozen, in the year 1654. Indeed, the item "lighting," continued up to the beginning of the present century to form one of the most dispiriting entries in a household budget. Louis the Fifteenth, whose predominant quality was not precisely thriftiness, exclaimed one day that one could keep a regiment, music and all, with what was spent each year at Versailles on wax lights alone. Voltaire, when dissatisfied with the pay afforded him by Frederick the Great, used to pocket the candle ends of his royal master. During Napoleon's consulship, the cost of lighting at the Tuileries, averaged twenty thousand francs per annum; and eleven years later, during the emperor's stay at Dresden, there were burned in one night, at a state ball, six hundred-weight of wax tapers: the cost being three thousand two hundred francs (one hundred and twenty-eight pounds).

But meanwhile, the burning of wax candles in drawing-rooms had caused the oil lamps to descend into the parlours and kitchens. There was no place for the smoky, grimy contrivances in apartments where paintings and gildings flourished; for throughout the lapse of ages the oil lamp had remained exactly what it was at first; being neither modified, nor in any way improved. There was this difference, however, that towards the middle of the eighteenth century, the number of oil lamps amongst the poorer classes increased considerably, by reason of the invention of colza oil. The new liquid was by far cheaper than either the olive oil used in the south of France and in Italy, or than the oil made out of whale's blubber, and burned in England and the north of Europe.

It was not till the year 1783, that the regeneration of the oil lamp was seriously undertaken. In that year appeared a radical reformer in the science of lighting. His name was Argand; he was a native of Switzerland; but resident in London, and an Englishman by adoption. This man invented the cylindrical wick of hollow form, and so devised as to fit between two cylinders of metal, placed one within the other, and standing up like a funnel from out of the body of the lamp. By a somewhat complicated process, the oil was made to flow up between the metal cylinders and saturate the wick; the which, thanks to its peculiar form, allowed a current of air to circulate within and around it, and thus double the force of the light. But this was not all, for it remained to discover some way of suppressing the smoke, and adding yet more, if possible, to the brilliancy of the flame. This twofold result was obtained by placing a glass chimney over the wick. By this means the smoke was consumed by the strength of the draught of air, the unpleasant smell of oil was abolished, and the glare of the lamp was rendered so powerful, that shades or screens became necessary.

The new lamps were at once popular, both in England and France. In the latter country they took the name of "Quinquet," from Jean Quinquet, the man who had imported and slightly improved them, by the addition of a convex reflector of polished metal, which, placed behind the lamp, had the effect of rendering it too dazzling for the sight to bear. Soon after, the brothers Frederick and Philippe Girard, Frenchmen, yet further improved the "Quinquet" by simplifying the method of conveying the oil into the wick-holder. They placed the receptacle for the oil below the wick, instead of above it, thus rendering the apparatus less cumbersome; and in order to deaden the crude glare of the flame without diminishing its intensity, they contrived those well-known globes of whitened glass, which give such a pretty effect to artificial light.

The first public appearance of the brothers Girard's new lamp took place in London in 1807, at a party given by the Duchesse de Berry, then in exile. It was enthusiastically admired; so much so, indeed, that the Empress Josephine, although a little nettled that the two Frenchmen should have taken their invention to England, ordered the brothers to attend at the Tuileries, and bring a lamp with them. This circumstance, though of no great moment in itself, becomes so from the fact that the lamp presented by the MM. Girard to the wife of Napoleon, was adorned with paintings on China by a young and obscure artist, at that time poor and struggling hard for bread, but destined later to become known throughout the world by the name of Jean Augustin Ingres.

The next inventor, or rather improver, of oil lamps was Carcel, another Frenchman,

who contrived the mechanism known by his name. It was not by any means a simple mechanism; it resembled the machinery of a clock, and was very expensive in consequence. But its merit consisted in the regularity and abundance with which it supplied the wick with oil, and in the clear, even, and never flickering light it always afforded. The Carcel lamp did not, however, remain long in use; for it was superseded towards the year 1825 by the *moderator* lamp, with which every one of us is acquainted, and which may almost be looked upon as perfection, in the matter of oil lighting.

The ameliorations introduced into oils, kept pace with the improvements in lamp machinery. About the year 1790, the manner of refining lamp oil by means of sulphuric acid was discovered almost simultaneously in England and in France. After this, new oils were extracted from all sorts of substances, coal and peat among them; and finally petroleum, the cheapest, if not quite the safest of oils, was discovered in America in 1845. In the three years that followed the opening of the first petroleum spring, ten million pounds' worth sterling of the valuable mineral oil was exported into Europe. Since then, petroleum springs have been found in Hanover and Galicia. It remains now, for some one to invent a method, of rendering this highly combustible liquid less dangerous; and it may then acquire a greater and more wide-spread popularity.

In proportion as lamps became better and cheaper, so did candles. One of the great drawbacks to candles, especially those of tallow, had been the constant necessity for snuffing them. In the seventeenth century, when theatres were lighted with tallow candles, the chandeliers had to be lowered between each act for the purpose of docking the wicks, and this circumstance afforded matter for endless jokes in small theatres, where the actors often came forward in their costumes to perform the needful ceremony. Molière's comedies are filled with allusions to the luckless players who, after moving their audiences by tragic orations, were compelled to appear ignominiously before the curtain, snuffers in hand. The invention of the plaited wick, steeped in boracic acid and thus made completely combustible, would have been a godsend to those Hamlets and Othellos; but unhappily for them, it only made its appearance in 1811, at about the same time as the stearine, paraffine, and ordinary composite candles; the cheapness of which, as compared with wax tapers, allowed our grandfathers to sit up much later of nights than they had been wont.

But wax and tallow, whale oil and colza oil, were all thrown into the shade by the sudden discovery of gas. The idea of this invention was of itself simple enough. Flame is nothing but hydrogen in a state of combustion. Things burn more or less easily, according as they contain much or little of this gas; when they contain none, they are not inflammable. This axiom of chemistry was known a very long time ago, and it is singular that men should have been so tardy in considering, that if substances such as coal and wood were dispossessed of their hydrogen, by a process of distillation, the very essence of flame would be obtained, without the burning of any tangible substance. As it was, the first experiments were not made until 1792. In that year, an Englishman, named Murdoch, distilled some hydrogen gas from coal and lighted his house, at Redwith, with it. But the invention excited no great interest until 1804, when Mr. Murdoch introduced gas lighting into a manufactory at Manchester. Twelve years later, the first gas company was established in London; and in 1816 the present method of lighting took the place of the almost useless oil lamps that swung creaking at the corners of the streets, without shedding their rays further than a few feet around them.

More than fifty years have elapsed since then; and science has already been at work attempting to dethrone gas, as gas in its time dethroned oil. Electric light, magnesium light, different varieties of new gases, have turn by turn been tried, but without, as yet, any definite success. No one can doubt, however, that the art of lighting has more strides to make yet, before coming to a standstill. Our descendants will probably think gas a very poor sort of light. But there is one thing we would like to know. In proportion as the facilities for lighting increase, are we to keep later and later hours, until at last we really do completely succeed in turning night into day? Already we have taken to dining at eight, and rising from table to begin the evening at about ten. Great balls now commence, at about the time when, a hundred years ago, they were supposed to finish; and our forefathers' maxim of "early to bed," appears to mean, in modern language, that people should acquire the laudable habit of lying down to rest as early as possible—in the morning.

A BED AT THE BUSTARD.

The Bustard is a roadside country inn, of which I have little to say, save that it is a picturesque gabled old hostelry, full of oak beams and ties and cross-trees, with many-sided rooms—all corners and recesses: and that I, weary traveller, was there accommodated with a bed. Some question certainly arose between the landlady and her maid as to whether there was a spare room at disposal; the maid seemed to think not; but the mistress, with a quick frown on the girl, assured me there was. After supper I was accordingly shown my chamber. It was no haunted room, so far as appearance went. There was nothing strange nor supernatural about the very comfortable-looking old four-poster, hung with snow-white dimity, nor about the old press, with its ancient brass wire handles in fish-shaped plates two by two, nor about the dressing table, nor the white window-

curtains. The chairs were buxom fat chairs, anything but spectral, stuffed all over with flock, and covered with a merry-patterned chintz, that went down to their feet like petticoats, making them look like jolly old *chair*-women (if the pun will pass) taking their ease. The room was still fragrant of the scent of wild flowers, that had come in, on the autumn breeze, from the fields and woods.

Being tired and sleepy, I soon put out my candle, and, having drawn up the blind in order that my eyes, even from bed, might rest on the deep calm expanse of moonlit sky, I dived down into the yielding feathery depths of the great fourposter.

The moon was shining brightly into the room, lighting up the white bed-furniture. Through the window, I could see two fir-trees standing out, sharp and black, against the pure glowing night sky. Watching them, I saw a little giddy star rising behind, now glittering in sight like a gem, now lost from view behind a sombre bough. It seemed to be playing a game of hide and seek with me, behind the tree branches, and to twinkle merrily, when it came out from a black bit of tree into the sky again. I can't tell how long I watched that saucy little star: but it was time enough to be able to calculate pretty exactly, how long it would take to rise up through the next branch that would obscure it. At last I lost my gay little friend behind a dark mass of foliage, and, seeing that it had now got into a deep bit of tree that would take it a good half hour to get through, I reckoned I would go to sleep.

(My object, I may as well confess, in parenthesis, in this little paper, is to endeavour to analyse the growth of a dream, out of the simply natural into the grotesque. What I am about to record, of last night, is one of the very few I have been able to so analyse, the waking impressions of dreams being generally so vague and incoherent; but I shall give it in every particular, as it fixed itself on my mind when I woke.)

I knew I was going to sleep. I knew, moreover, presently that I *was* asleep; but the moment in which wakefulness merged into slumber, I have never, on this or any other occasion, been able to detect. Although distinctly conscious that I was dreaming, I still saw my room, and my window, and the fir-trees, and was still watching for the star to come out through the bit of tree. I pretended, however, to myself that I did *not* know I was dreaming, and chuckled to think of the deception I was practising on myself, who thought I *was*. I had thus resolved myself into two distinct personalities. One personality firmly believing what I saw to be real and material, and the other personality deriding the idea. But I myself, the deriding personality, was in my turn taken in. Looking towards the bottom of my bed, which I so well knew was only phantasy, I saw a dreadful dwarf, of whose unreality I could by no means persuade myself. I certainly did not then know, nor can I recal at what point of my dream I first discovered, that my other and more credulous self was at that moment having its laugh at *me*, well knowing that the dreadful dwarf which alarmed me was only a distorted mind-picture of a little comical figure of a man made out of a lobster-shell, of which I had caught sight whilst undressing. I had seen him hanging, by a loop of tape, to a bright nail over the mantelpiece, when I got into bed.

There, however, stood the dreadful dwarf at my bed's foot, vivid and plain. The first thing that made him seem terrible, and at the same time made me believe in him, was the vague impression on my mind that I had somewhere seen him before, but could not for the life of me tell where. If I had before seen him alive, I knew he must be real, without a doubt. But how could I have seen him before, except in life, or in a previous state of existence? I was convinced he was a real live being, and the moment I became so convinced, the horrible thing demonstrated the fact by rolling its eyes, and making a chop with its jaws. He was a dreadful dwarf. His nose and chin were like, and of the colour of, lobster pincers; his hair was like the little bristly hair on lobsters' feet; he had two great antennæ, which he swished about, and eyes at the end of protruding muscles, which revolved, so that he could see round a corner. He was a dwarf, understand, to me, as compared with *my* natural size, but, in comparison with the little image of which my other self knew he was but the picture, he was a giant of fearful proportions. I suppose it was these two views of his relative size, as seen by my two distinct selves, made me so confused as to his apparent size, as to lead me to think this terrible being at one moment expanded into a giant, and the next, contracted into a dwarf again. Such, at least, was my impression; and he became very hideous from these sudden contractions and expansions, like a grotesque india-rubber nightmare. There was one little detail about the figure especially annoying to me, for the simple reason that I could not explain it, yet it seemed to convince me in some odd way that he was very real, and no dream fancy. It was a loop sticking up at the back of his coat. Now, I argued with myself, this is no creation of fancy, because no man would ever dream a coat on a hobgoblin, with a real loop to hang up that coat by, when it was done with. It seemed so life-like. My other self knew very well that loop had no such purpose, that it had a deeper and probably a deadlier meaning, but could not recollect what. So the loop passed into a mystery to my other self, and a subject of awe to me. A mystery and a subject of awe. Then I noticed a subtle vapour that was stealing about the dreadful dwarf, wrapping him round in wreaths. As he still kept on madly elongating himself from dwarf to giant, and shrinking again from giant to dwarf, I noticed the vapour entirely hid him from sight when he shrivelled up to his smallest, so that I could no longer see him as a dwarf, but it only reached to his knees as a giant. This was a source of terror, as I always feared he would emerge

from the cloud in some new and terrible shape. But for a long time all he did was to rise up, chop with his jaws, and roll his eyes, then sink down into his cloud, and I could hear him chop, and feel he was rolling his eyes again. Presently I noticed, that each time he sank down, he did not go so far down as before. I found this out first, by seeing the loop of his coat sticking up out of his cloud, when he had once dwarfed; next I saw his nose go down when he chopped; next I saw his chin come up, until at last, though he still kept up an uncertain jogging motion up and down, he remained a giant.

I wanted to know why he jogged. My other self knew, but would not tell me. Looking at him made me dizzy, and I felt I was jogging too, but why we both jogged I hadn't the remotest idea. I tried to stop jogging, but in vain. A dreadful feeling came over me as the jogs got worse. I had found it out. Idiot that I was, the bed that I had trusted in was no bed at all, but the back of a great bustard that was jogging and jolting along with me at a fearful speed, and the dreadful dwarf-giant was on the back of another, chasing me, and counting off every mile with a chop. I had awoke to my position too late. I was being hurried I knew not where. Wasn't I dreaming now, and hadn't I made a mistake? my other self asked. A mistake? And going a mile a moment, and feeling the wind cutting my face, like a scourge? Oh! it was too much: why I could hear the other bustard with the dwarf on it, not three paces behind. I could hear the bird breathing, snorting, snoring. *Was* it myself snoring? I don't snore. And *was* there any draught from a window enough to cut you in two? No, no. I was going, on my heaving, lurching, brute of a bird, goodness only knew where, at about the rate of a cannon-ball, so fast, that the dreadful dwarf was chopping an incessant tattoo with his teeth, to tick off the miles. Whether the road was earth, or air, or sky I could not tell; we were going too fast to have been able to see houses, trees, or people, had we passed any. There was nothing but a kind of dusty mist, that rose up and obscured whatever it was that brutal bird's feet were racing over. Then I thought I wouldn't put up with this treatment. Aware, however, that it was required of me for some inscrutable purpose to pursue my headlong career, I thought I would go to sleep on the bustard's back, and *dream* that I was being still hurried along and chopped after. With a sleepy kind of cunning it occurred to me, how this would swindle the power that was driving me, and the chopping dwarf, and the beastly bird, when they came to find they were only racing after a dream.

I went to sleep on the bustard's back and chuckled. But I felt I had been guilty of a mean piece of deception, and dreaded retribution. I then knew by some kind of intuition that the dreadful dwarf had a pistol, and was going to shoot me, as soon as his jogging bird would let him take aim. I didn't know whether still to keep on sleeping, or to be honest, and wake. I reflected, however, that if I only dreamed he shot me, I couldn't be killed, whilst if I woke up and was shot, it might be fatal, so I basely continued to dream. A horrible thought then took hold of me. If I still kept on sleeping, I might be killed in my sleep, and not know it! That would be awkward. It was essential I should think of some deep-laid scheme to prevent this. You see, I reasoned with myself, so long as your will has the power to direct your body to obedience, you can't be dead. As soon as he shoots, you repeat to yourself, "All right." If your tongue says it when you tell it to, and if your ears hear your tongue say it, you are not dead. Satisfied with this test, I continued to dream the bustard was still urging me wildly forward, and had the indescribable pleasure of feeling I was deceiving the bustard, and also old lobster chops, who didn't know but what I was really there, and not safe in dreamland out of his reach.

Crack! I heard the dwarf's pistol go. "All right," I said to myself. To my delight I heard myself say it. There was no mistake about it, I had circumvented him. Alas! it was a revolver. Crack! again. "All right" again. I was unmistakably alive. I can't tell you how proud I was of this test, so simple yet so effective. Crack! twice more. "All right" still. Of course, I thought, how could any one be killed in a dream? Absurd, you know.

Crack!

I had felt no pain. Bless me, how ever was it? Had I woke up by accident? I tried to pronounce my two reassuring words, but my tongue refused obedience; my ears couldn't hear it. I tried several times, but in vain. Then it occurred to me I was dead. Dead, the unfortunate victim of an erroneous theory. There could be no doubt that I was dead, for I immediately felt myself slowly rising, like a mist, through the air, and floating through the close-woven spiny foliage of two fir-trees, so dense you could not shoot an arrow through. I inhaled, in my vapoury form, the aromatic gums of the pine as I passed through the boughs; then, rising, found my mist had contracted and become pure spirit that glowed like fire, till I knew *I* was the tiny star, that had taken just half an hour to pass through the great top boughs of the fir-tree. I knew, moreover, that I, the star, would be visible to myself lying in my bed at the inn. I could also see my own dead body lying on its face beneath the fir-trees, and I saw the dreadful dwarf come and turn me over to see if I really *was* dead, and, being satisfied, saw him ride away on his bird, chopping. The last I saw of him in the horizon, when he was bird down and lobster chops down, was his loop, and it puzzled me still to think what that loop was for. It neither puzzled nor confused me to think I had *three* selfs—viz., my present, or star—self, my murdered self, and my still sleeping self at the inn.

Then I made a discovery I longed to impart to Professor Airy, Astronomer Royal. Stars, I

discovered, are not stars. They are nothing but silver nails driven into the sky, and that is why they fall down in November, when the wind shakes out those that are not tightly hammered in. I deduced this startling discovery from the fact that I was a star, and, on close examination, had found myself only a common silver nail. It almost stopped my twinkling to think of the gross and impudent deception that had been practised on the public, in bringing them up to believe, that stars were anything more. Then they are not high—scarcely a mile, within easy ballooning distance—and yet the world had never found it out. *I* was dumb, another of myself was dead, and the third asleep, and I—*we* could never tell the discovery. I had one pleasing reflection that helped, in some degree, to make amends for my inability to tell the world about stars. That was a sort of comfortable internal consciousness, that my being driven into the sky as a silver nail, had some intimate concern with a very just revenge to be wrought on my murderer the dwarf, though without any idea how it was to be realised.

We stars, you must know, are sizeable nails, about the size of a giant's hat-peg. I was driven in, in a row with half a dozen others. I heard a kind of a chopping noise near me, and, looking up, who should I see but the dreadful dwarf and his mysterious loop. I was aware then, for the first time, that he lived up here; that this was, in short, his passage, and that we were his hat-pegs. I saw him take off his lobster-shell hat and hang it on an adjacent star, like an extinguisher, to put it out for the night. Then I shone on him most seductively. I suppose he thought he had taken his coat off, but these cunning people so often overreach themselves. He took hold of his loop, and I conclude, in a moment of absence of mind, he hung *himself* up, in his coat, on the silver nail, which was the star, which was me. He gave several terrible chops, which were like music in my ears, revenge being sweet. He was then no more. I wished he could have been some more for a trifle longer, for I revelled in his sufferings. Alas, for rejoicing in the misfortunes of others. His weight was too much for me. I felt myself loosening from a wretched lath and plaster sky, and at last down I came, lobster man and all, a good mile, plump on the earth.

—The floor of my room, of course. Naturally, the fall woke me from my dream. Looking out of window I saw the star I had watched before dozing off to sleep, had just emerged from the top bough of the firs, and the lobster man was comfortably hanging, by his loop, to a silver nail over the mantelshelf. I resumed my broken rest, and slept dreamless till morning.

When I came down-stairs, the waitress ventured to ask how I had slept. I explained I had had a bad dream.

"I knew how 'twould be, sir," she explained. "I've told missus of it afore to-day. 'Tain't nothing new. Everybody dreams bad that sleeps in that bed."

"Indeed," I said; "and pray why does everybody dream bad, who sleeps there?"

"Because, if you please, sir, missus she stuffed that there bed with *live* feathers—never baked 'em first" (she explained, observing I didn't comprehend), "and they heave, and heave, and heave, and rise like yeast when anybody sleeps on 'em, and you are bound to dream."

STATUE-MAKING.

STATUES are dear. The reason why statues are so dear, is, that the mere cost of making them is very great:—far beyond what is commonly supposed. It is a fact, as melancholy as true, that many sculptors (especially among those who are little in renown) have barely enough to pay them for the material cost of their work, in a cheque, which to inexperienced eyes might seem very liberal. A certain class of speculators, who trade on the talent of young but penurious artists, know this perfectly well; and the public may understand it the better, if they will consider the various processes through which a work of sculpture must pass, from the moment when it is conceived by the artist, to the day when it is exhibited as a complete work.

First, let us treat of marble sculpture.

When an artist thinks of executing a statue in marble, his first step is usually to make a drawing of what he has planned. Some sculptors make as many as ten, twenty, fifty, drawings before hitting upon a composition which pleases them; and this labour is of course multiplied threefold or fourfold when a group is projected, and not merely a single figure. No one who has not studied sculpture, can realise the arduous problems involved in the designing of a limb, or in the correct delineation of a posture. A line out of place, a curve too hastily drawn, and the effect of the whole work may be marred. Patience is the watchword of sculptors. Better begin a sketch, a hundred times, than allow a bad drawing to become the design of a faulty statue.

After the work of sketching has been happily ended, the sculptor begins modelling, either in clay or wax, one or more miniatures of the statue, and has them cast in plaster. This process of modelling is to the making of a statue what the laying of a foundation stone is to the rearing of a building; it is the inauguration of the real work. Too frequently, however, the early models bring cruel deceptions to the artist. He finds that he has imagined more than he is able to perform, that his hand refuses to follow the guidance of his brain; or, worse still, that the figure which looked well enough on paper will not do for a statue, and that the whole course of planning and sketching must be gone through again. This is the moment most trying to beginners, especially to those who are over diffident. Upon finding how poorly his work interprets the meaning of his fancy, many a young artist throws up his

hands in depair and feels his heart fail him. Canova is said to have been so discouraged by the result of his first attempt at modelling, as to have exclaimed that moulding pats of butter was all he should ever be fit for. But these qualms of despondency are easily combated with a little courage; a resolute man perseveres, for he knows that no really good thing is ever accomplished without trouble. When he has obtained a miniature that satisfies him, and has got the plaster cast of it, he sets to work again with his clay, and fashions another model of the exact size of his proposed statue. The limbs of this new clay figure are usually copied from nature. Sitting to artists is a regular profession, and those who follow it, like great doctors, great barristers, or great surgeons, raise their demands in proportion as their fame makes their services more valuable. A certain Moor, of wonderful beauty, who exists in Paris to this day, was so much in request among French painters and sculptors, some twenty years ago, that he would never consent to "pose," for less than forty francs. He was rarely to be met with except in the studios of very well-to-do artists, or in the pupil studios, where, perched on a platform, he was the "cynosure" of some fifty or sixty beginners, all of whom had clubbed together to pay him his couple of louis d'or. This personage wore kid gloves and smoked Havana cigars; but a great number of male sitters are stalwart cavalry soldiers, who spend their earnings as soon as they have got them, and have seldom foresight enough to make a fortune out of the exhibiting of thews and sinews.

When the process of modelling has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, and a new plaster cast taken whilst the clay is still moist, as in the instance of the first miniature designs, the artist can judge of the effect of his future statue, for this plaster cast is the exact prototype of it. He can fold his arms, too, for the moment; for the next steps to be taken do not concern him, but are the business of another artist, known technically as the "statuary."

Some great sculptors, Michael Angelo among them, have occasionally, themselves, hewn their statues straight out of the block of marble, without going through the preliminary courses of modelling in clay, and casting in plaster; but this is very rarely done, for in the first place the work would be too long for any artist who has a regard for his time, and in the second the hewing of marble demands a special practical experience, which makes it an art apart. A sculptor would probably spoil a hundred blocks of marble, before making so much as a statuette a foot high, were he to trust himself only in the matter. Even Michael Angelo, when he tried to dispense with the "statuary," or "practitioner," succeeded only in making fragments of figures. Not being an adept in judging of the size of the block he needed, he was constantly finding that he had miscalculated, and that an arm, a leg, or a head, must remain unfinished in consequence.

The "statuary," who is often an artist of great merit, and possessed of as much talent in his way as the sculptor in his, sets the plaster model on a platform, measures it, and places it side by side with a block of marble of the requisite height and breadth. This done, he applies to the model an instrument of mathematical precision, by which he obtains the detailed measure of every part and angle of the statue. He then returns to the marble, and roughly sketches on the outside of it, by means of points, a sort of outline of the figure or group. Upon each of the spots where he has marked a point with his pencil, a workman bores a hole with an awl, taking great care, however, not to bore a fraction of an inch deeper than he is told. When the statuary has inspected all the sides of the block, and when the holes have all been bored according to his directions, the marble looks as though it had been riddled by bullets. A second workman now appears, with a chisel and hammer to hew away the fragments of marble between the different holes, and along the pencil lines drawn as guide marks. This work is more or less easy, according as the attitude of the statue is simple or fanciful. If the figure be one of a modern personage standing placidly with his arms by his sides, attired in the clothes of our day, and with nothing eccentric in the posture of his legs, the task offers no difficulties, and may be entrusted to a very ordinary workman; but if the subject be a group or a figure in an attitude—for instance, like that of Ajax defying the lightning—the chisel cannot be entrusted to any but a practised hand, and every blow of the hammer must be struck with the greatest caution. The appearance presented by the marble when the preparatory hewing has ended, is that of some person or persons thickly wrapped up in a shroud. The outlines of head and body can be vaguely detected under the white covering, but nothing more; and it is not until the statuary himself has set to work with his finer chisel and more delicate hand, that a tangible form begins to emerge from the hard mass. First the head, then the shoulders and trunk, then the legs, and then the arms and hands appear. The arms and hands, if outstretched, are reserved to the last; if detached first from the block, the oscillations caused by the chisel in hewing the other parts of the marble might shake and crack them. This is a very necessary precaution, and it is even usual to keep the arms, the fingers, and other projecting parts of marble statues continually supported by props of wood, until the moment when the work is set upon its pedestal, and uncovered.

When the statue is handed over again to the sculptor that he may give the final touches to it, there sometimes remains scarcely anything for him to do. This is the case when the "statuary" is himself a first-rate artist, and can trust himself to imitate to a nicety, the slightest details of form and expression in the plaster model. But such examples are rare: less because of the incapacity of statuaries,

than by reason of the natural desire which every artist has, to terminate in person, the work he has conceived and begun. The statue is usually returned to the sculptor in a half-finished state, the fine touches which will constitute the special beauty of the work yet remaining to be done. The most delicate of tools are then employed; slender chisels with the finest points; toy hammers with scarcely a weight to them, little graters that fit on, something like thimbles, to the top of the fore-finger. And to polish the marble and smooth it, tripoli, lead, chamois-leather, sand-paper, sponges steeped in oil, and the palm of the hand are used. When the work represents a naked figure, the amount of care needed for the correct modelling of the limbs and muscles is inconceivable. Works like the Laocoon, the Dying Gladiator, the Venus of Medici, the Apollo Belvedere, must have cost the makers more trouble and anxiety than any sum of money could repay. And it is but common generosity on the part of the critic, even when he pauses before what he considers a faulty statue, to be very lenient in his judgment of it.

We pass to statues in bronze.

In this case, as in that of marble sculpturing, the preliminaries, in so far as regards the sketching on paper and the modelling in clay, are identical. But there are two ways of casting in bronze: piece by piece or all at once. We will deal with the latter method first.

When the clay model is finished, it is not cast in plaster, but is covered with a coating of wax, of the intended thickness of the metal. A preparation composed of a peculiar sort of clay, which has been mixed with horse-dung and reduced to powder, after having been allowed to ferment and then to dry, is taken and wetted so as to form a paste. To give a certain degree of consistency to it, there is added a small proportion of calf's dung, the cohesive properties of which answer better, for this purpose, than any other matter known. The mixture thus obtained is capable of resisting the most intense heat, and is therefore superior to plaster, which cannot support more than a certain temperature. The clay model coated with wax is thickly covered with this substance, and set in a warm place to dry. When the drying is completed, the wax between the interior of the mould and the outside of the model is slowly melted by fire; the mould is then strengthened by being tightly bound round with broad iron bands, chains, and three or four layers of wet plaster and earth. The whole is well heaped over with clay: a sort of chimney hole and a few ventilators being contrived to allow free passage to the air and smoke. A monster fire is next lighted, and seven days and seven nights of burning are required to bake the mould. After this, a pit is dug, the mould is lowered into it, and once more covered up with earth; a few ventilators are made as before, and an orifice is perforated by which the molten metal may flow in a large jet, through the opening at the bottom of the mould. The orifice is connected with a huge caldron, over which, or attached to which, is the furnace where the brass is being melted in a raging fire.

It is then that the exciting part of the work begins; for, however carefully all the precautions may have been taken to this point, there is nothing as yet to guarantee success. The blunder of a workman, the imprudence of an apprentice, may undo everything, and may cause the making of a new model, and the baking of a new mould (another month's work), to be necessary.

When the masses of brass in the furnace are nearly melted, the caldron is carefully swept, that there be neither straw nor pebble left in it. The master founder then inspects the six or eight plugs which stop the vent-holes of the caldron, and, after seeing that they are properly closed, commits the keeping of each of them to a separate workman, whose duty it will be to pull quickly out at the word of command.

The operation of casting an important statue requires brave and intelligent men, who will not lose their presence of mind at sight of the sudden rush of flaming metal, nor faint under the stifling heat of fire and smoke. To protect their faces and necks from sparks of molten bronze, they wear masks; their arms and hands are covered by canvas gauntlets, previously steeped in water, and daubed over with wet earth. When the brass has at last been liquefied, the final charges of pewter and zinc are cast into the furnace. These last two metals melt immediately, and the mixture which makes up bronze is then completed. Everything is then ready for the casting. The workmen take their posts. A deep silence reigns. The master founder, armed with a strong bar of iron, steps forward, and, with a vigorous blow, knocks in the iron plate which stops the reservoir of the furnace. The white-hot metal gushes out with a hissing sound, like a torrent of burning lava, and fills the caldron. The workmen pull out the plugs, the molten bronze flows gurgling through the orifices into the mould; whiffs of blue flame and steam dart out from the ventilators; the caldron is empty, and the statue is cast.

The cooling process occupies several days. The next thing to do is to break the nucleus model in clay, and to empty the statue. This, although a tedious work, is a safe one, and after it is accomplished the bronze figure is well washed, furbished with dry brushes, packed up in cocoa-nut matting, and ready to be sent to its destination.

The casting piece by piece is attended with more trouble but with fewer risks than the casting in *a single jet*. It would be tedious to give a detailed description of the process employed, for words would scarcely render the thing intelligible without the aid of diagrams. The advantages of the piece by piece system lie in the fact that the spoiling of a part does not mar the whole, as is the case when the statue is cast after the fashion we have just

described. The pieces, when founded, are soldered together; but a statue or a group cast in this manner, has much less artistic merit than a work cast in one mould.

Statues are sometimes cast in other metals than bronze; in gold or silver, for instance. The ancients, who were richer and more prodigal than their modern descendants, were accustomed to the sight of statues cast in precious metals, for the adornment of their temples or villas. In these days we are fain to content ourselves with marble or bronze, and no government would think of ordering a statue like that of the Jupiter of Phidias which measured forty feet in height, and was of pure ivory and gold. The Minister of Finance of the period, when he discharged the sculptor's little bill, probably did not indulge in the grimace, which a nineteenth century political economist would assuredly make, under similar circumstances. At most, he perhaps gave an uneasy smile, but even if he did this—which is not certain—he had, at all events, the satisfaction of knowing that he paid for a priceless work: which is more than can be said of sundry ministers now-a-days, who, at much cost to the national purse, have adorned the British capital with very dismal effigies; as for instance the dreary monster riding a cock-horse to Banbury Cross, by way of Constitution Hill; and that other monster in a curly wig, also bound for Banbury Cross by way of Trafalgar-square.

A WREATH OF FANCIES.

WEAPONS.

Both swords and guns are strong, no doubt,
And so are tongue and pen,
And so are sheaves of good bank notes
To sway the souls of men.
But guns and swords, and gold and thought,
Though mighty in their sphere,
Are sometimes feebler than a smile,
And poorer than a tear.

FOUNDERED.

How many a glorious morning have I seen
Darken ere noon in fearfullest eclipse!
How many a sea, pellucid and serene,
Have I known treacherous to deep laden ships.
Alas! alas! how many a gallant soul—
Artist, romancer, scholar, bard, divine,
Poor wherries in the wild Atlantic roll—
Have I seen founder in the pitiless brine!

A GRAVE.

Bury me not, bury me not,
Under the greenwood tree;
Bury me not in the earth at all,
Bury me in the sea!

What do I care for a monument?
What for a lying scroll?
What for a record of this or that?
I am a living soul!

And if the spirit should haunt
The place where the body lies,
Then mine shall float on the flying wind,
Betwixt the waves and skies.

Spite, nor malice, nor scorn,
Shall desecrate the spot,
And the whirling breeze shall sing the dirge
Of one remembered not.

THE GREAT WARRIOR.

I am a warrior, stout and strong,
I've fought the cold world, hard and long,
I've fought it for a crust of bread,
And for a place to lay my head.
I've fought it for my name and pride,
Back to the wall, with both hands tied;
I've felt its foot upon my brain,
And struggled, and got up again!
And so I will, if so I must,
Until this dust returns to dust.
Meanwhile the battle rages on,
Let me die fighting, and begone!

HEAVEN AND HELL.

Is Heaven a place, or state of mind?
Let old experience tell!
Love carries Heaven where'er it goes,
And Hatred carries Hell.

CLOUDS.

Nobody looks at the clouds
With a love that equals mine,
I know them in their beauty,
In the morn or the even shine.

I know them and possess them,
My castles in the air,
My palaces, cathedrals,
And hanging gardens fair.

Sometimes I think, star-gazing,
That many a monarch proud,
Has far less joy in his halls of stone
Than I in my halls of cloud.

THE DEVIL AND I.

The devil? Yes! I have often seen him,
Changeful ever in form and face;
Once in the shape of a lump of money,
Once like a maid in her youthful grace.
Once like a life-long hope accomplished,
Once in the shape of a thought instill'd,
Once in the guise of my heart's ambition,
Once like a promise of joy fulfilled!

Never he comes as a roaring lion.
No! He is always calm and bland,
Courteous, witty, and pleasant spoken
As the bravest gentleman in the land.
'Tis a cheating game that we play together;
But he's not so clever as men opine!
I know that his worship's dice are loaded—
He does not know that I've loaded MINE!

WRETCHEDVILLE.

Danks took to drinking, and as for his matrimonial affairs, the late Sir Cresswell Cresswell was fain to take *them* in hand; and a pretty case was Danks versus Danks, I promise you. Having sold or mortgaged every "carcase" he possessed, and undermined his own with strong liquors, Danks went into the Bankruptcy Court, and soon afterwards died, of a severe attack of rum and water, and trade assignee, on the brain—a wholly ruined, and still uncertificated trader. It was a sad end for a man who had once served the office of churchwarden, and driven his own chaise-cart—who had banked with the London and County, and whose brother-in-law's uncle was reputed to be the proprietor of a New River share; but the mills of the gods grind small, and Danks,

to my thinking, only met in his decadence with his deserts. When I spoke of "carcases" just now, I did not intend to imply that Danks was a wholesale butcher. *His* carcases were of bricks and mortar, and of his own making. Danks was a builder. He took the contract once for the Doleful-hill Lunatic Asylum, by which he did so well—notwithstanding the complaints of the architect in respect to the bricks—that he was enabled to build a large number of semi-detached villas, and a still larger quantity of "carcases," as a speculation of his own. Had he been prudent—had common sense or even common decency been his guides—he might have made a fortune, and be living at this day in his own house at South Kensington, six storeys high, and with a belvedere at one end, like the Eddystone lighthouse. His wife might have had a box at the opera in lieu of that sad witness-box at the Divorce Court, and his sons might be enjoying a college education instead of being (as I know is the case with Tom) a waiter at a chop house in Pope's Head Alley, or suffering every kind of hardship and privation (which I am afraid is Phil's mournful lot) as cabin boy to that well-known disciplinarian, Captain Roper, of the ship Anne and Sarah Cobbum of Great Grimsby. This misguided Danks might have become rich, respected, and a member of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Instead of this—flying in the face of his reason and experience, of which he should have had a fair share, seeing that he weighed nearly seventeen stone—he went and built Wretchedville. And then, forsooth, the man wondered that he was ruined.

The ground, to begin with, was the very worst in the whole county. It was an ugly, polygonal plot, shelving down from the higher road that leads from Sobbington to Doleful-hill: a clay soil, of course, but in very bad repute for the making of bricks. Indeed the clay did not seem to be fit for anything, save to stick to the boot soles of people who were incautious enough to walk over it. When any rain fell, it remained here for about seven days after the adjoining ground had dried up. Then the clay resolved itself into a solution of a dark red colour, and the spot assumed the aspect of a field of gore. When it was not clayey it was marshy; and the neighbours had long since christened the place "Ague Hole." Danks in his frenzy, and with the Vale of Health at Hampstead in his eye, wanted to call it "Pleasant Hollow;" but the ground landlord, or rather landlady, Miss Goole (she went melancholy mad, left half her fortune to the Doleful-hill Asylum, and the will is still the subject of a nice little litigation in chancery)—Miss Goole, I say, who granted Danks his building lease, insisted that the group of tenements he intended to erect should be called Wretchedville. Her aunt had been a Miss Wretched, of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

And Wretchedville the place remains to this day. Danks did his best, or rather his worst with it. He proposed to drain the ground, the result of which was, that water made its appearance in places where it had not appeared before. He laid out a declivitous road branching downwards from the highway, and leading nowhere save to the reservoir of the West Howlington Gasworks; and a nice terminus to the vista did this monstrous iron tub make. He spent all his own money, and as much of other people's as he could possibly borrow, on Wretchedville, and then, as I have hinted, Bacchus and he became inseparable companions, and he continued to "wreathe the rosy bowl" and "quaff the maddening wine cup," the two ordinarily assuming the guise of rum-and-water, cold, till he woke up one morning in the Messenger's Office in Basinghall-street, waiting for his protection. Swamper, the great buyer-up of carcases, was a secured creditor, and came into possession of Wretchedville; but Swamper is the world-known contractor, whose dealings with the Bucharest Improvements, and the Herzegovina Baths and Washhouses Company, have been made lately the subject of such lively public comment. He is generally oscillating between his offices in Great George-street, Westminster, and the Danubian provinces, and has had little time to attend to Wretchedville. He has been heard to express an opinion that the place—the confounded hole he calls it—will "turn up trumps" some day; and, indeed, plans for a new county prison, on a remarkably eligible site between Doleful-hill and Sobbington, have been hanging up for some time, neatly framed and glazed, in his office. Meanwhile the Wretchedville rents are receivable by Messrs. Flimsy and Quinsy, auctioneers, valuers, and estate agents, of Chancery-lane; and Swamper's affairs being, as I am given to understand, in somewhat evil trim, it is not unlikely that Wretchedville, ere long, will fall into fresh hands. And I don't envy the man into whose hands it falls.

How I came to be acquainted with Wretchedville was in this wise. I was in

quest, last autumn, of a nice quiet place within a convenient distance of town, where I could finish an epic poem—or, stay, was it a five act drama?—on which I had been long engaged, and where I could be secure from the annoyance of organ grinders, and of reverend gentlemen leaving little subscription books one day, and calling for them the next—I should like to know what difference there is between them and the people who leave the packets of steel pens, and the patent lamp-globe protector, and Bullinger's History of the Inquisition, under the special patronage of the Archbishop of Tobago, to be continued in monthly parts—together with the people who want your autograph, and others who want money, and things of that kind. I pined for a place where one could be very snug, and where one's friends didn't drop in "just to look you up, old fellow;" and where the post didn't come in too often. So I packed up a bag of needments, and availing myself of a mid-day train, on the Great Domdaniel Railway, alighted haphazard at a station.

It turned out to be Sobbington. I saw at a glance that Sobbington was too fashionable, not to say stuck up, for me. The Waltz from Faust was pianofortetically audible from at least half-a-dozen semi-detached windows; and this, combined with some painful variations on "Take then the Sabre," and a cursory glance into a stationer's shop and fancy warehouse, where two stern mammas, of low church aspect, were purchasing the back numbers of the New Pugwell-square Pulpit, and three young ladies were telegraphically enquiring, behind their parents' backs, of the young person at the counter, whether any letters had been left for them, sufficed to accelerate my departure from Sobbington. The next station on the road, I was told, was Doleful-hill, and then came Deadwood Junction. I thought I would take a little walk, and see what the open and what the covert yielded. I left my bag with a moody porter at the Sobbington station, and trudged along the road which had been indicated to me as leading to Doleful-hill. It happened to be a very splendid afternoon. There were patches of golden and of purple gorse skirting those parts of the road in which the semi-detached villa eruption had not yet broken out; the distant hills were delicately blue, and the mellow sun was distilling his rays into diamonds and rubies on the roof of a wondrous Palace of Glass, which does duty in these parts, as Vesuvius does duty in Naples, as a pervading presence. At Portici, and at Torre del Greco, at Sobbington, or at Doleful-hill, turn whithersoever you will, the Mountain seems close upon you, always.

It is true that I was a little dashed, when I encountered an organ grinder lugubriously winding, "Slap bang, here we are again!" off his brazen reel, and looking anything but a jolly dog. Organ grinding was contrary to the code I had laid down to govern my retirement. But the autumnal sun shone very genially on this child of the Sunny South—who had possibly come from the bleakest part of Piedmont—his smile was of the sunniest, likewise, and there was a roguish twinkle in his black eyes, and, though his cheeks were brown, his teeth were of the whitest. So, as I gave him pence, I determined inwardly, that I would tolerate at least one organ grinder if he came near where I lived. It is true that I had not the remotest idea of where I was going to live.

I walked onwards and onwards, admiring the pied cows in the far off pastures—cows, the white specks on whose hides occurred so artistically, that one might have thought, that the scenic arrangement of the landscape had been entrusted to Mr. Birket Foster.

Anon I saw coming towards me a butcher boy in his cart, drawn by a fast trotting pony. It was a light high spring cart, very natty and shiny, with the names and addresses of the proprietors, Messrs. Hock, butchers to the royal family, West Deadwood—which of the princes or princesses reside at West Deadwood, I wonder?—emblazoned on the panels. The butcher boy shone, too, with a suety sheen. The joints which formed his cargo, were of the hue of which an English girl's cheeks should be: pure red and white. And the good sun shone upon all. The equipage came rattling along at a high trot, the butcher squaring his arms and whistling—I could *see* him whistle from afar off. I asked him when he neared me how far it might be to Doleful-hill.

"Good two mile," quoth the butcher boy, pulling up. "Steady, you warmint." This was to the trotting pony. "But," he continued, "you'll have to pass Wretchedville first. Lays in a 'ole a little to the left, arf a mile on."

"Wretchedville," thought I; "what an odd name. What sort of a place is it?" I enquired.

"Well," replied the butcher boy. "It's a lively place, a werry lively place. I should say that it was lively enough to make a cricket bust himself for spite: it's so uncommon lively." And with this enigmatical deliverance the butcher boy relapsed into a whistle of the utmost shrillness, and rattled away towards Sobbington.

I wish that it had not been quite so golden an afternoon. A little dulness, a few clouds in the sky might have acted as a caveat against Wretchedville. But I plodded on and on, finding all things looking beautiful in that autumn glow. I came positively on a gipsy encampment; blanket tent; donkey tethered to a cart-wheel; brown man in a wideawake, hammering at a tin pot; brown woman with a yellow kerchief, sitting cross-legged, mending brown man's pantaloons; brown little brats of Egypt swarming across the road, and holding out their burnt-sienna hands for largesse, and the regular gipsy's kettle swinging from the crossed sticks over a fire of stolen furze. Farmer Somebody's poultry simmering in the pot, no doubt. Family linen—somebody else's linen yesterday—drying on an adjacent bush. Who says that the picturesque is dead? The days of Sir Roger de Coverley had come again. So I went on and on admiring, and down the declivitous road into Wretchedville, and to Destruction.

Were there any apartments "to let?" Of course there were. The very first house I came to was, as regards the parlour window, nearly blocked up by a placard treating of apartments furnished. Am I right in describing it as the parlour window? I scarcely know, for the front door, with which it was on a level, was approached by such a very steep flight of steps that, when you stood on the topmost one it seemed as though, with a very slight effort, you could have peeped in at the bedroom window, or touched one of the chimney-pots; while, as regards the basement, the front kitchen—I beg pardon, the breakfast parlour—appeared to be a good way above the level of the street. The space in the first floor window not occupied by the placard, was filled by a monstrous group of wax fruit, the lemons as big as pumpkins, and the leaves unnaturally green. The window below—it was a single windowed front—served merely as a frame for the half-length portrait of a lady in a cap, ringlets, and a colossal cameo brooch. The eyes of this portrait were fixed upon me, and before, almost, I had lifted a very small, light knocker, decorated, so far as I could make out, with the cast-iron effigy of a desponding ape, and had struck this against a door which, to judge from the amount of percussion produced, was composed of Bristol board, highly varnished, the portal itself flew open, and the portrait of the basement appeared in the flesh. Indeed, it was the same portrait. Down stairs it had been Mrs. Primpris looking out into the Wretchedville road for lodgers. Up-stairs it was Mrs. Primpris letting her lodgings, and glorying in the act.

She didn't ask for any references. She didn't hasten to inform me that there were no children, or any other lodgers. She didn't look doubtful, when I told her that the whole of my luggage consisted of a black bag, which I had left at the Sobbington station. She seemed rather pleased than otherwise at the idea of the bag, and said that her Alfred should go for it. She didn't object to smoking; and she at once invested me with the Order of the Latch-key—a latch-key at Wretchedville, ha! ha! She further held me with her glittering eye, and I listened like a two years' child, while she let me the lodgings for a fortnight, certain. Perhaps it was less her eye that dazed me than her cameo, on which there was, in high relief, and on a ground of the hue of a pig's liver, the effigy of a young woman with a straight nose and a round chin; and a quantity of snakes in her hair. I don't think that cameo came from Rome. I think it came from Tottenham-court-road.

She had converted me into a single gentleman lodger, of quiet and retired habits—or was I a widower of independent means seeking a home in a cheerful family?—so suddenly, that I beheld all things as in a dream. Thinking, perchance, that the first stone of that monumental edifice, the Bill, could not be laid too quickly, she immediately provided me with Tea. There was a little cottage loaf, so hard, round, shiny, and compact, that I experienced a well-nigh uncontrollable desire to fling it up to the ceiling, to ascertain whether it would chip off any portion of a preposterous rosette in stucco in the centre, representing a sunflower, surrounded by cabbage leaves. This terrible ornament was, by the way, one of the chief sources of my misery at Wretchedville. I was continually apprehensive that it would tumble down bodily on to the table. In addition to the cottage loaf, there was a pretentious teapot which, had it been of sterling silver,

would have been worth fifty guineas, but which, in its ghastly gleaming said plainly "Sheffield" and "imposture." There was a piece of butter in a shape, like a diminutive haystack, and with a cow sprawling on the top, in high relief. It was a pallid butter, from which with difficulty you shaved off adipocerous scales, which would not be persuaded to adhere to the bread, but flew off at tangents, and went rolling about an intolerably large tea-tray, on whose papier-mâché surface was depicted the death of Captain Hedley Vicars. The Crimean sky was inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and the gallant captain's face was highly enriched with blue and crimson foil paper. As for the tea, I don't think I ever tasted such a peculiar mixture. Did you ever sip warm catsup, sweetened with borax? *That* was something like it. And what was that sediment, strongly resembling the sand at Great Yarmouth, at the bottom of the cup? I sat down to my meal, however, and made as much play with the cottage loaf as I could. Had the loaf been varnished? It smelt and looked as though it had undergone that process. Everything in the house smelt like varnish. I was uncomfortably conscious, too, during my repast—one side of the room being all window—that I was performing the part of a "Portrait of the Gentleman in the first floor," and that as such I was sitting to Mrs. Lucknow at Number Twelve, opposite—I know her name was Lucknow, for a brass plate on the door said so—whose own half-length portrait was visible in her breakfast parlour window, glowering at me reproachfully because I had not taken her first floor, in the window of which was, not a group of wax fruit, but a sham alabaster vase full of artificial flowers. Every window in Wretchedville exhibited one or other of these ornaments, and it was from their contemplation that I began to understand, how it was that the "fancy goods" trade in the Minories and Houndsditch throve so well. They made things there to be purchased by the housekeepers of Wretchedville. The presence of Mrs. Lucknow at the glass case over the way was becoming unbearable, when the unpleasant vision was shut out by the appearance of Mrs. Primpris's Alfred, who, with his sister Selina, had been sent to Sobbington for my bag. Alfred was a boy with a taste for art. In the daytime he was continually copying the head of a Greek person (sex uncertain) in a helmet, who reminded you equally of a hairdresser's dummy in plaster, and of a fireman of the Fire Brigade. He used to bring studies of this party in white, red, and black chalk to me, and expect that I would reward him for his proficiency with threepenny pieces "to buy india-rubber;" and then Mrs. Primpris would be sure to be lurking outside the door, and audibly expressing her wish that some good, kind, gentleman would get Alfred into the Blue Coat School, which she appeared to look upon, as a kind of eleemosynary institution in connexion with the Royal Academy of Arts. I can't help suspecting, from sundry private conversations I had with Alfred, that he entertained a profound detestation for the plaster person in the helmet, and for the Fine Arts generally; but, as he logically observed, he was "kep at it," and "it was no use hollerin'." As for his sister Selina, all I can remember of her is that one leg of her tucked calico trousers was always two inches and a half longer than the other, and that for a girl of thirteen she had the most alarmingly sharp shoulder-blades I ever saw. I always used to think when I saw these osseous angularities, oscillating like the beams of a marine engine, that the next time her piston-rod like arms moved, the scapulæ must come through her frock. Mrs. Primpris was a disciplinarian; and whenever I heard Selina plaintively yelping in the kitchen, I felt tolerably certain that Mrs. Primpris was correcting her, on her shoulder-blades, with a shoe.

The shades of evening fell, and Mrs. Primpris brought me in a monstrous paraffin lamp, the flame of which wouldn't do anything but lick the glass chimney, till it had smoked it to the hue proper to observe eclipses by, and then sputter into extinction, emitting a charnel-house like odour. After that we tried a couple of composites (six to the pound) in green glass candlesticks. I asked Mrs. Primpris if she could send me up a book to read, and she favoured me, per Alfred and Selina, with her whole library, consisting of the Asylum Press Almanac for 1860, two odd volumes of the Calcutta Directory; the Brewer and Distiller's Assistant; Julia de Crespigny, or a Winter in London; Dunoyer's French Idioms; and the Reverend Mr. Huntington's Bank of Faith. I took out my cigar-case after this, and began to smoke; and then I heard Mrs. Primpris coughing, and a number of doors being thrown wide open. Upon this I concluded that I would go to bed. My sleeping apartment—the first floor back—was a

perfect cube. One side was window, overlooking a strip of clay soil hemmed in between brick walls. There were no tombstones yet, but if it wasn't a cemetery why, when I opened the window to get rid of the odour of the varnish, did it smell like one? The opposite side of the cube was composed of a chest of drawers. I am not impertinently curious by nature, but, as I was the first-floor lodger, I thought myself entitled to open the top long drawer, with a view to the bestowal therein of the contents of my black bag. The drawer was not empty; but that which it held made me very nervous. I suppose the weird figure I saw stretched out there, with pink arms and legs sprouting from a shroud of silver paper, a quantity of ghastly auburn curls, and two blue glass eyes unnaturally gleaming in the midst of a mask of salmon-coloured wax, was Selina's best doll, the present, perhaps, of her uncle, who was, haply, a Calcutta director, or an Asylum Press Almanac maker, or a brewer and distiller, or a cashier in the Bank of Faith. I shut the drawer again hurriedly, and that doll, in its silver paper cerecloth, haunted me all night.

The third side of my bedroom consisted of chimney—the coldest, hardest, brightest looking fireplace I ever saw, out of Hampton Court Palace guardroom. The fourth side was door. I forget into which corner was hitched a washhand stand. The ceiling was mainly stucco rosette, of the pattern of the one in my sitting-room. Among the crazes which came over me at this time was one, to the effect that this bedroom was a cabin on board ship, and that if the ship should happen to lurch, or roll in the trough of the sea, I must infallibly tumble out of the door, or the window, or into the drawer where the doll was—unless the drawer and the doll came out to me—or up the chimney. I think that I murmured "Steady," as I clomb into bed. My couch—an "Arabian" one Mrs. Primpris said proudly—seemingly consisted of the Logan, or celebrated rocking stone of Cornwall, loosely covered with bleached canvas, under which was certain loose foreign matter, but whether composed of flocculi of wool, or of the halves of kidney potatoes I am not in a position to state. At all events I awoke in the morning, marbled all over like a scagliola column. I never knew, too, before, that any blankets were ever manufactured, in Yorkshire or elsewhere, so remarkably small and thin as the two seeming flannel pocket-handkerchiefs with blue and crimson edging, which formed part of Mrs. Primpris's Arabian bed-furniture. Nor had I hitherto been aware, as I was when I lay with that window at my feet, that the moon was so very large. The orb of night seemed to tumble upon me, flat, until I felt as though I were lying in a cold frying-pan. It was a "watery moon," I have reason to think, for when I awoke the next morning, much battered with visionary conflicts with the doll, I found that it was raining cats and dogs.

"The rain," the poet tells us, "it raineth every day." It rained most prosaically all that day at Wretchedville, and the next, and from Monday morning till Saturday night, and then until the middle of the next week. Dear me! Dear me! How wretched I was. I hasten to declare that I have no kind of complaint to make against Mrs. Primpris. Not a flea was felt in her house. The cleanliness of the villa was so scrupulous as to be distressing. It smelt of soap and scrubbing brush, like a Refuge. Mrs. Primpris was strictly honest, even to the extent of inquiring what I would like to have done with the fat of cold mutton chops, and sending me up antediluvian crusts, the remnants of last week's cottage loaves, with which I would play moodily at knock-'em-downs, using the pepper caster as a pin. I have nothing to say against Alfred's fondness for art. India-rubber, to be sure, is apter to smear than to obliterate drawings in chalk; but a threepenny piece is not much; and you cannot too early encourage the imitative faculties. And again, if Selina did require correction, I am not prepared to deny that a shoe may be the best implement, and the bladebones the most fitting portion of the human anatomy, for such an exercitation. I merely say that I was wretched at Wretchedville, and that Mrs. Primpris's apartments very much aggravated my misery. The usual objections taken to a lodging house are to the effect that the furniture is dingy, the cooking execrable, the servant a slattern, and the landlady either a crocodile or a tigress. Now my indictment against my Wretchedville apartments simply amounts to this: that everything was too new. Never were there such staring paper-hangings, such gaudily printed druggets for carpets, such blazing hearth-rugs—one representing the Dog of Montargis seizing the murderer of the Forest of Bondy—such gleaming fire-irons, and such remarkably shiny looking-glasses, with gilt halters for frames. The crockery was new, and the glue in the chairs and tables was

scarcely dry. The new veneer peeled off the new chiffonnier. The roller blinds to the windows were so new that they wouldn't work. The new stair-carpeting used to dazzle my eyes so, that I was always tripping myself up; the new oil-cloth in the hall smelt like the Trinity House repository for new buoys, and Mrs. Primpris was always full dressed, cameo brooch and all, by nine o'clock in the morning. She confessed, once or twice during my stay, that her house was not quite "seasoned." It was not even seasoned to sound. Every time the kitchen fire was poked you heard the sound in the sitting-room. As to perfumes, whenever the lid of the copper in the washhouse was raised, the first-floor lodger was aware of the fact. I knew, by the simple evidence of my olfactory organs, what Mrs. Primpris had for dinner, every day. Pork, accompanied by some green esculent, boiled, predominated.

When my fortnight's tenancy had expired —I never went outside the house until I left it for good—and my epic poem, or what ever it was, had more or less been completed, I returned to London, and had a fine bilious attack. The doctor said it was painter's colic; I said at the time that it was disappointed ambition, for the booksellers had looked very coldly on my poetical proposals, and the managers, to a man, had refused to read my play; but, at this present writing, I believe the sole cause of my malady to have been Wretchedville. I hope they will pull down the villas and build the jail there soon, and that the rascal-convicts will be as wretched as I was.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. ACROSS DARTMOOR.

Wild country westward, where the Teign, struggles on through a rocky valley, shut in by towering hills, on which the clouds rest. The crow hovers over the old camps of Prestonbury and Cranbrook Castles, hard by Fingle Bridge, because Mr. Merivale thinks, that here the Britons wrestled with the rapacious Romans for every inch of land, before they retreated back towards the Tamar; and it was hereabouts, perhaps, that Titus saved his father, Vespasian, from the British axes in that rough western campaign, when passes like this into the broken country of Dartmoor were objects of such fierce contention, between the legionary and his half-savage foe.

No doubt this savage scenery impressed itself on the minds of our old chieftains, who encamped in its fastnesses, for the local legends are numerous as the seeds at the back of a fern leaf. Just by Ghilston Farm stands that strange Druidical work—the Spinsters' Rock a table stone supported on three rude pillars. On this sepulchre of we know not what forgotten warrior, the crow alights, and inquiringly pecks at the green pads of moss, and the blots of grey lichen, as if they concealed some ancient epitaph. This cromlech fell in 1862, and was replaced with great labour. The local tradition is that three spinsters (giantesses of course) erected this trophy as a mere breather, one morning before breakfast. Old writers, however, say that three young men and their father brought the stones from the highest tors of Dartmoor. Wild antiquaries, on the maddest of hobby horses, instantly leaping at this, declare that the old man means Noah, and the three sons typify Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The Druids are supposed to have had traditions of the Deluge and the Ark, it is true, but this legend, there is no doubt, is only one of those fantastic stories which are invented to account for the achievements of the early races. Ecclesiological antiquaries, who go mad about the Ark, and see it in every logan poised on a hill-top, are scarcely less mad than the Norse antiquarians, who discern in every block of Devonshire granite an altar to Thor or Odin. So these amiable Celtic enthusiasts resolve to see in the harmless Spinsters' Rock, types of the three sisters, the choosers of the slain, the Fates of the Scandinavian mythology, those dark sisters, who rode over battle plains to call doomed warriors to Odin.

Accustomed to the permanence of things, we forget that the day will come when the last ruin will fall, and the last picture of the old masters perish. The great porcelain tower of Nankin has gone to the ground, and only the other day Titian's chef-d'œuvre, Peter the Martyr, perished by fire. It startles one to hear now and then of a rocking stone, or a cathedral spire, falling — more leaves blown from the old tree. Close by the Spinsters' Rock, apropos of this reflection, there is a logan stone lying in the channel of the stream, embedded firmly in the sand. Polwhele mentions it, in 1797, as fixed on the hill above, where he moved it with one hand.

More wild hills, golden with furze, down which Roman and Briton once rolled in the death-lock, stabbing, hewing, cursing, shouting to their gods, and staining the granite blocks with blood. The crow alights with his sidelong drift, as light as a snowflake, on the White Stone, where the local legend is that King Arthur and the enemy of mankind flung quoits at each other, which quoits are now transformed into shapeless blocks of granite, and remain to confirm the legend.

Moreton Hampstead, close by the White Stone, boasts an old cross and an old elm-tree at the entrance of the churchyard. The local tradition is, that this tree was formerly the very centre of the old village festivities. Here the forefathers of the hamlet met, and on the long horizontal boughs of this tree a stage used to be erected for dancing, the fiddler working his elbow merrily on a branch above.

A flight forward, and the crow, passing

haunts of the raven and the fox, granite altars, wooded hills, and noisy mill-streams, skims to that strangest of all the Devonshire logans, the Nutcracking Rock, on the rocky ridge by Lustleigh Cleave, not far from Monaton. This logan can be moved with a little finger, and the country boys crack nuts at the points where the keel of the logan strikes against its supporter. It is at Monaton, close by, that it is said there was once a monster of a snake that haunted the valley—a monster with a body as big as a man's, with real legs, broad sail wings, and a hiss that could be heard for miles. It is hard to account for the great prevalence of snake legends in Devonshire.

The crow strikes forth now for the source of the Dart, that river so sudden in its anger, so wild and tumultuous. The legend is that the river every year demands a victim.

River of Dart, oh, river of Dart,
Every year thou claimest a heart.

The doomed man, till the day comes, ploughs calmly in the moorside villages, fishes in the Teign valley, drives on the western roads, hurries in the western trains, goes here, goes there, still, sooner or later, he comes, at the destined hour, to the river, swollen and clamorous for its victim, and, struggle as he may, is at once hurried to his death. Swift over the borders of Dartmoor, where the hills are crowned with granite ruins, and bogs and oak woods mingle with ploughlands and little green carpets of pasture, the bird alights on the grey tower of that bleak, out-of-the-world place, Widdicomb-in-the Moors, shut in by rocky hills, and surrounded by the sites of British villages, old roadways, and relics of strange Druid worship. This tranquil place, sheltered by its primeval sycamore trees, had a ghastly visit from King Death in October, 1638. The villagers were gathered in the church, the prayer was being said, the hymn sung, when gradually the air grew darker, and a storm began to gather. Alarmed looks were exchanged, the children drew closer to their mothers. Suddenly, after some flashes of cross lightning, a ball of fire burst through one of the windows, and broke, like a red-hot shell, among the frightened and scattering people. At the same moment the roof and tower were struck, the stones of the steeple fell in a shower, "as fast," says the local historian, "as if they had been thrown down by a hundred men," and a pinnacle of the tower also crashed in. Four persons were killed on the spot, and sixty-two were wounded, some by the fire and others by the stones. There could be no doubt of the author of this calamity. Some mysterious guilt must have rested upon the village, for an old woman who kept a little public-house on a lonely edge of the moor, remembered, that, just as church went in, a tall lame man dressed in black, riding a powerful black horse, inquired the way to Widdicomb Church, and called for a stoup of cyder. He wanted her to show him to the church, being afraid of losing his way on the moor, but the old woman was too cautious, for she observed that the cyder he drank smoked and hissed as it went down his throat, and, as he stumbled upon his horse, a palpable cloven hoof protruded from his boot. Half an hour after, this gentleman in black cast the fireball into Widdicomb Church.

The crow has now twenty miles of moor to flap its wings over. A desolate tract of coarse grass and reeds, whortleberry and moss; valleys thick bushed with fern and furze; central oozing masses of morass that swell and burst with the rain, and are the source of half the Devonshire rivers; bare wind-swept tors crowned with rocks that are now like ruined castles, now like giants and wild beasts; hills consecrated in old times to the gods of the Druids. Watchful over miles of heather, green moss, red grass, and rushes, the crow bears on in unimpeded flight, to that strange spot Cranmere Pool, that little bright oasis among the Dartmoor morasses, where the country people believe that lost spirits, purgatorially imprisoned, are to be heard at night when the wind is loudest, wailing in the bitterness of their despair.

The one hundred and thirty acres of Dartmoor, supposed to have been once a forest, were in King John's time an asylum for deer and wild cattle. Henry the Third gave them to Richard Duke of Cornwall, and in Edward the Third's reign they became part of the Duchy. No wonder that superstition still holds Dartmoor as a stronghold. Still, on wild stormy nights, when even the dwarf oaks of the Wistman's wood crouch lower before the blast, Woden the swart "master" is still heard urging his wish hounds from tor to tor, chasing the goblins from glen to glen. The brown man of the moors still starts up, to scare the traveller as he passes the workings of the old tin mines, and, in curdling mist or drifting snow, malicious pixies still mislead shivering travellers, and beguile them to their death. Many a horseman have the pixies led to "the Dartmoor stables," as the most dangerous of the morasses are sardonically called. By moonlight, too, under the tors, the pixies still hold their revels, and when ceasing to work man mischief, dance, feast, and sing.

The crow rests in its flight at Crockern Tor, because there the old Stannary court used to be held, and as late as 1749 the tinners met there in Parliament, and, seated on granite benches under the open sky of that cold damp region, discussed their preliminary ancient laws, and their disputes, before adjourning to one of the adjacent towns. There are records of an Earl of Bath in old times attending the meetings in this strange place, aaccompanied by several hundred retainers, and with half the country at his back. This was an old British custom of extreme antiquity. The Isle of Man has still its parliament hill, and it is well known that the ancient Britons held their assizes and great palavers, in the great stone circles and turf amphitheatres.

But it is up the stream of the Dart, in that ghostly valley bounded by Crockern Tor and Little and Great Bairdown, the slopes of which are strewn with countless tombstones of granite,

and the distant ridge of which is crowned by the petrified wild beast that is known to the wild huntsman's hounds as Row Tor, that the crow peeringly, as if a murdered man lay there, hovers above the strangest place in all the moor—the Wistman's wood—that humble remnant of the great forest through whose green glades the wild deer leaped, and whose broad green boughs shed blossoms on the helmeted heads of the knights of Richard of the Lion Heart. The dwarfed oaks in this enchanted wood, that seem blighted by some curse, are festooned with ivy and matted with moss. They spread their matted heads above a thorny adder-haunted confusion of granite blocks, crushed close, and kept down by the tyrannous moor winds. These stunted trees, feathered with fern, and encumbered with choking parasites, have been struggling for a livelihood in this forlorn place ever since the Conqueror sprang from his boat upon the Hastings shore. Old records prove that beyond dispute. When the Briton wore his collar of gold and wielded his bronze axe for a sceptre, they were here; when the Briton was a mere hunted fugitive, cowering in the brake when the Roman trumpets sounded over the tors, these trees were still crowding together in abject submission to the rude elements. The Plantagenets passed, and the Tudors, and the Stuarts, and still the wood, under the curse, struggled on. The average height of the trees is only ten or twelve feet, but many reach only the stature of a man. The local saying is that, in Wistman's wood, there are five hundred oaks five hundred feet high, meaning that each tree averages one foot in height. The antiquarian theorists have, of course, been hard at this wood, whittling out paradoxes. A. insists that this was one of those "groves in stony places" mentioned in Scripture as dedicated to Baal and Ashtoreth. In such a rocky valley the priests of Baal may have shouted to their god and cut themselves with flints, as when Elisha mocked the tardiness of their deity. B is equally sure that this was a grove of Woden, who still hunts with his spectral hounds over the quaking morass where even the fox can scarcely pass. The Phœnician tin streamers, and the fugitive Britons who hid here, brought these wild traditions to the moor, and there they still linger in cramped growth, like the crabbed knotted trees of the Wistman's wood. By the old Cyclopean bridges that the Britons piled across the Dart in these places, by the overthrown cromlechs, and logans long fallen from their mystic balance, the legends of Odin and his hell hounds still linger, fitting the place as well as the wall-flower does the ruin, or the mushroom ring the meadow. Here alone, like the last of an otherwise extinct race, the traditions of an old mythology remain, and will remain perhaps for ever. They befit the blighted forest, the No Man's Land, the howling waste, the eternal wilderness, the primeval barrens of Dartmoor, and should be studied on the spot where the heather is most purple, the moss greenest and softest, among spectral tors filmed with shadows, where the streams are blue as the sky when the rocks are grey in the sunshine, or, better still, by the swamp where the snipe calls and the bittern booms, when the streams, swollen by rain, come sounding down the rocky valleys.

It is a singular thing how some places seem set apart by nature for scenes of suffering, flight, tribulation, and sorrow; and to the wounded and the unhappy, the defeated and the oppressed, these rocks were always ramparts. The Briton fled here from the Roman, the Briton fled here from the Saxon, and the Saxon fled here from the Norman. Even later, in the French war, ten thousand French prisoners were kept in the great walled pound at Princes Town, shut in by double walls, a military road, endless sentinels, and an enceinte of ceaseless mist and rain. The sentries then had large bells, which they rang at intervals during great fogs, to warn each other, to alarm the Napoleonists, and to guide belated travellers. When peace came, the prison, for a long time a mere landmark, was turned into a naphtha manufactory. In 1850, it again became a prison, and now, once more, the escaped convict occasionally skulks behind the Dartmoor tors, and seeks shelter with the fox and the snake, fitting companions, where the hounded Briton, his noble forefather, once fled the Roman spears. There in the morass, with the plover screaming over head, the Artful Dodger may still stave out a day or two, safe from the weary crank, and the cruel toil of the granite quarry.

A flap of the crow's wing drives the inquisitive bird through the blue Devonshire air from the lonely convict prison to Fitz's Well, whose votive granite slabs still bear the initials of John Fitz, of Fitzford, near Tavistock, and the date 1568. They are a record of Devonshire superstition, being placed over a spring by a knight and his lady, in Elizabeth's reign; one day, pixy led, they lost their way on the moor, and when worn out and hopeless, came suddenly, to their joy, upon these refreshing waters.

These pixies, who live in the clefts of the granite rocks, occupy an important place in Devonshire mythology. The peasantry drop pins or other offerings when they pass their haunts, and children, dreading lest elfin mothers should adopt them, do not venture near pixy haunted places after sunset. The pixies hide their gold among the tors. They are heard on dark nights galloping by on horses they have borrowed from the farmers, or are heard pounding their cyder in Sheeps Tor caverns.

Far above the hut circles and stone avenues of Black Tor, the crow passes silently till he comes to Fox Tor, and there he alights with a full swoop upon a legend of Edward the Third's reign. The story goes that at this time, when Cressy was talked of as Inkerman is now, John Childe, of Plymstoke, a knight of fortune, who was devotedly fond of hunting, was here benighted. Mists rose, pixies lured him on with false lights, snow set in in blinding flakes, there was no help and no shelter, so John Childe, hard driven, stabbed his horse, cut the poor beast open, and crept into its bowels for shelter. But all in vain. That night he perished. The monks of Tavistock, hearing of the mysterious disap-

pearance of the knight, and of his intention (often expressed) of leaving his lands to the church in which he should be buried, at once seized cross, torch, and crozier, and started over the deep snow for the moor, searching everywhere in the white drifts for the lost man. At last they found his snowy tomb in a morass under Fox Tor, and by him his will, written with horse's blood.

The fyrste that fyndes and brings me to my grave,
The lands of Plymstoke they shall have.

Whether the will, however, was found there or not by the monks, this at least is certain, that they produced it in due form soon afterwards. But though they did hurry off with the corpse, greedily anxious for the reward, the people of Plymstoke lay in wait for them at a ford where they would pass. The monks were not going to be caught so easily; they changed the road, threw a bridge over the river near the abbey, reached Tavistock in safety, produced the indisputable will, and gained the lands. A cross was erected to Childe by the grateful monks, at the foot of Fox Tor, and so stood till twenty years ago, when some ignorant workmen destroyed it, in the absence of their master. The story, we regret to confess, must be very old or else untrue, for Plymstoke belonged to the Tavistock Benedictines (as the author of Murray's Devonshire and Cornwall observes) before the Conquest. The same legend, too, is found in St. Dunstan's life.

A little beyond Merrival, that moorland hamlet scarcely yet out of the wilderness, the crow casts his quick eye on Druid circles, rock pillars, and cromlechs, dating back to the legendary time of Devonshire mythology when wolves infested the valleys, and winged serpents the hills. The hut circles here were used as market-places when the plague devastated Tavistock. The townspeople, sad and hopeless, fresh from the graves of their fathers and children, pale, bandaged, and muffled up, afraid to give or receive contagion, came here and placed their money in these stone circles, and took away the provisions brought for them by the scared country people.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE morning again! The delightful air, cool, refreshing; the trees and walks and groves. But, with their *sham* air of innocence, the taint of sin and temptation. To their leaves and branches cling the mutterings and despairing ejaculations of those wandering under them, who have lost peace and happiness for ever, and found ruin. There are the innocent, as it were, the titularly good—the young girls and their mammas, who, in a cowardly way, lend their sanction to these villanies, throwing the cloak of respectability over this den, and who pay no penalty. They affect to shut their eyes, and selfishly enjoy. Yet *they* are as guilty as any. I tell them so, solemnly. Shame—shame on them, who have not even the poor pretext of damaged health! They will spend their money and enjoy themselves—ay, and more scandal for them!—will all the time sanctimoniously reprobate what is going on round them, and then return quite happy and as they came. Then they will tell their friends, "Oh, it was shocking to see those scenes! *We never went near the place, except just passing through.*" Lay that unction to your souls, my pious ladies—that hypocrisy won't do. You have not fallen, because your jaded hearts are indifferent, and so caked over with the cold crust of fashion and deceit, that you have lost even the warm feeling of temptation. So take no pride in *that*, and never fear, you will all be reckoned with, and in good time, and according to the weight of your responsibility. There is one who weighs all these things, in scales, to which the most accurate balance that jeweller could devise for his gold and gems, is as rude as a common weighing-machine. There they were, all passing me, with their empty chatter. They seemed to look at me, but I know this was my own morbid soul. Oh, if I could get away home—anywhere—even into a jail! But how is this to end? What must I do?

I was wearied with all this *agony*, worn down sorely, as if I had been carrying a heavy load and was now come to an inn to rest; and then, dropping to sleep, I had reasoned myself into a belief that it might not be so awful a calamity after all. As usual, the blessed night and more blessed sleep seemed to interpose and put all off for a long indistinct time, like the troubles which the wise prophesy to children when they are to grow up. But with the *morning*—a cold and grey one—I was put back again, to long before the time I had left off at. It was all to begin again with that terrible soreness and dull aching oppressing of my heart, as though some calamity from which there was *no* hope of extrication *had taken place last night*. I lingered on, actually shrinking from rising, not from laziness, dreading to go out and face these goblins; but I did go out along the beautiful walk, by the charming trees, breathing the fresh morning air, but shrinking guiltily from every face I met, as if they knew my *crime*. How every familiar object, only a short time ago so welcome and agreeable, now jarred upon me, they all touched that one horrible chord which goes harshly into my very heart.

How I hate the very cheerfulness and vapid hilarity of these morning fools who greet each other so complacently, and clatter their nonsense about their "tumblers." I could not endure it. The band was now a damned, hellish, orchestra, hired by the demons who *had ruined me!* It seemed to thrill every nerve in my wretched system, and to send my heart in wild leaps and spasms dancing upwards. I could wish to fling myself away headlong, to get free—to escape—but I was bound fast, as if in a cell in a jail, and did not see how it was all to be resolved! It was as though I had a fortune yesterday and was ruined to-day! It was as good as ruin! Oh, folly! stupidly blind dulness! or rather *the devilish infernal* perverseness which was lying in wait for me, and choosing the most luckless moment, found a diabolical zest in stopping me at every turn! I believe *that*—from my soul, I do! *There* it is, where these demons find their true relish and enjoyment; just as a devilish man would find *his* in mortifying you, or frustrating your plans. No; it was too exceptional. I don't want to be told according to the *cant*, "it was all chance," or that the run was against me. I believe, solemnly, it was regularly organised below in the cellars of hell, that they planned the whole expressly because they knew me to be their sure and certain enemy! They might well wish to be revenged; for I did them mischief enough. A fine return I have got, truly! Handed over *to them*, made their victim, pillaged, miserably destroyed for ever body and soul! Where shall I look for that money? Chance indeed! Could I not show my piles of cards, marked for days, and weeks, and I defy *any* man to point out such a combination and tell *me* that I should have stumbled accidentally on such a juncture! No! it has the mark of its satanic authorship. A poor wretch could struggle against a taunting ruffian like D'Eyncourt, but could not play against hell and its master! With coolness, desperation, I should beat them still; they would not be allowed to have it all their own way.

I saw the clergyman of the place hurrying past—he whom I had "set down" so cleverly the first day almost, and who had never forgiven the mortification. He looked at me inquisitively, as if trying to make out particulars in my face, by reporting which he could gain consequence. A fine specimen of the charity that delighteth in the evil of no man! Of course he thought himself *superior*, though he dared not, for his credit's sake, expose himself to the temptation. He saw all this contempt, and that I read, and had read him before, like a book; and uncommon poor reading he was! So he passed on, but I caught him in the act of looking back. Then he stopped and returned to me.

"You look unwell," he said, "and quite changed. You seem to excite yourself too much."

"If I excite no one else," I replied, coldly, "it becomes my own affair."

"I am sorry to see this," he said, "and, you will forgive me for reminding you, I did my best to warn you."

"Warners," I said, perfectly beside myself at his impertinence, "would be sadly grieved if their warnings did not come true. In your pulpits you revel in consigning people to tortures and punishments; but, thank God, you have no power to send us there!"

He looked at me a moment, and then said, with assumed quietness, "I am very, *very* sorry for this. I know your story, and you do me wrong if you think I judge harshly of you. I believe you mean well. You have a charming household at home, and God knows it is hard for even the best of us to stand to our resolutions."

"The best of us," I said, "meaning, of course, you and your cloth—— But come, *I* do not ask for your *official* services, and there is no resolution of mine that concerns the chaplain of the licensed gambling hells of Homburg."

I think he must have shrunk under this thrust. I had not lost my old powers of cut and hit; but again he answered quietly:

"I mean no offence, and it is sincere pity that makes me speak. Bear with me. Do not suppose I am thinking of any trifling money loss—twenty, or thirty, or forty, or even a hundred pounds. Numbers of the best and wisest do that, and no shame to them. I myself, whom you would say should be ex-officio perfect, often commit things quite analogous in their way. Indeed you mistake me; I heard you were unfortunate, and as I begged of you before not to go near the danger, so do I now beg of you not to make too much of the danger. It is after all a trifle."

I was a little astonished at this new tone, and even stopped a hard hit that was actually on its way. I suppose he had some object. Very likely the hell-keepers, with whom he was on an agreeable footing, had sent him to prevent anything "unpleasant" taking place, or that might shock the company. He went on:

"I know enough to say that in this place all losses appear magnified, unnaturally distorted even. When you get away, you will smile to see how you have been affected. I have known this happen again and again. Even if the loss be great, what is it compared with the sorrow, despair, waste of life, and utter hopelessness into which this morbid feeling of yours will hurry you!"

"You speak to me," I said, "with uncommon freedom, sir."

"Good Heavens!" he went on, "what are a few pounds, compared with life, and a happy home; with the misery which you selfishly—forgive me the word—entail on those who should be so dear to you should you persist in investing this matter with all the horrors of a tragedy. Come, Mr. Austen, be a man, and a manly one; face this difficulty as a hundred thousand merchants and commercial men have faced far greater ones. The first thing is, fly from this place, without a second's delay. Think of your lost money as if it had gone back into the bowels of the earth from whence it came. Let it go! It will never come *back* to you!"

"Fine comforter!" I said.

"Get to your own home, your dear home, as fast as you can travel, night and day, until you have put the sea between you and this fatal tempter. Then search out your friends, tell them the trouble boldly, get the weight off your soul, and you will be amazed to find with what a quiet, 'Is *that all?*' they will come to rescue you from your terrible misfortune."

"Fine advice!" I said, bitterly. "Your trade, sir, in this place, accustoms you to think lightly of all the wretchedness that flows from the infamous system maintained here! At the news of some wretch found suspended in that wood, 'Is that all?' would be the remark of you, and your *employers*."

He coloured.

"'My employers!' But I see I am wasting your time and my own. I must tell you that you have been most ungracious, now as you were in the beginning. If you had attended to me then, with even ordinary civility, you might have been spared this humiliation and even degradation. For I tell you, and I see it as plainly as that bright sun, you are only beginning, and you will be dragged down fatally, lower and still lower. The very first day I noted your self-sufficiency and confidence, and air of superiority to these most pardonable human failings."

"Pardonable," I said, amazed at the man's obsequious toleration of vice.

"Yes, pardonable; and I knew that you would be one of the earliest to fall. I would have helped you, that is, have got you help, to leave this place; but go on your own road *now:* I shall not trouble you more."

He was gone, to make his morning calls to the fashionable strangers wandering about, just as the humbug German doctor made his. How insulting he was with his impertinent taunt about "my superiority" and self-sufficiency, because I *dared* to encroach *upon his* preserves and to talk piously and conscientiously without a *licence! There* was the sting! So he would get me helped away would he? *Now* I see it all. His employers would be the *ones* to help me away. They do not like to see excited faces, or wild eyes, about their place. It scares the genteel. Fine almonership for the church! And, sooner than contaminate my fingers with their unholy gold, I would beg! So *that* was the secret of his embassy. I shall neither fly nor stay; but I am not sunk so low, as that the loss of some money should lay me under obligation to a doubtful and "shady," as they call it, parson.

NOTE TO SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD.

We have received a temperate statement from a resident in Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal Republic, referring to the article, South African Gold, which appeared in Number Five of our New Series, page one hundred and six.

It would appear that, although many bad characters may make the Transvaal Republic a place of refuge, it should by no means be inferred that the population is exclusively recruited from the ranks of the miscreants and other members of the "dangerous" classes.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read at Glasgow, February 18; Edinburgh, February 19; Glasgow, February 22; Edinburgh, February 24; Glasgow, February 25; Edinburgh, February 26; St. James's Hall, London, March 2; Wolverhampton, March 4; Manchester, March 6 and 8; Hull, March 10; York, March 11; Hull, March 12.

All communications to be addressed to Messrs. Chappell and Co., 50, New Bond-street, London, W.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER III. "NEWS FROM THE HUMMING CITY."

AFTER the ladies left the dining-room, Walter Joyce, in the general re-arrangement of seats thereon ensuing, found himself placed next to Mr. Gould. It was soon obvious that his propinquity was not accidental on Mr. Gould's part. That keen-looking gentleman at once wheeled round in his chair, helped himself to a few olives and a glass of the driest sherry within his reach, and then fixing his bright steel-blue eyes on his neighbour, said, "That was news for you, that about young Creswell's accident, Mr. Joyce?"

"It was indeed," replied Walter; "and—to a certain extent—sad news."

"You knew the boy who was killed, and his father?"

"Both. I knew the boy well; he was a pupil in the school where I was an usher, and I knew the father—by sight—as a man in my position would know a man in his."

"Ah—of course!" and Mr. Gould glanced more keenly than ever at his interlocutor, to see whether he was speaking earnestly or contemptuously. Earnestly, he thought, after a glance, and Joyce fell a little in the worldly man's opinion. He sucked an olive slowly, made a little pattern on his plate with the stones, and then said, "Do you think this affair will make any difference in Mr. Creswell's future?"

"In his future? Will the loss of his son make any difference in his future? Are you serious in asking such a question, Mr. Gould? Will it not leave his life a blank, a vague misery without——"

"Yes, yes, of course; I know all about that. You'll pardon me, Mr. Joyce, I'm a much older man than you, and therefore you won't mind my experiencing a certain amount of delight in your perfect freshness and simplicity. As to leaving the man's life blank, and all that—nonsense, my dear sir, sheer nonsense. He'll find plenty of distraction, even at his age, to fill up the blank. Now I was not considering the question from a domestic point of view in the least; what I meant was, do you think that it will alter any of his intentions as regards public life?"

"Public life?—Mr. Creswell?"

"Yes, indeed, public life, Mr. Creswell! I suppose now there's no harm in telling you that the Conservative authorities in London, the wire-pullers in Westminster, have long had it in their minds to wrest the second seat for Brocksopp from the Liberals, that at the next general election they have determined to make the fight, and they have selected Mr. Creswell as their champion."

"Mr. Creswell of Woolgreaves—going into Parliament?"

"Well, that's rather a summary way of putting it, Mr. Joyce," said the lawyer with a chuckle. "Say rather, going to try to get into Parliament! Didwell, of Brocksopp, the Liberal agent, is a deuced longheaded fellow, and will make a tremendous struggle to keep Mr. Creswell out in the cold. Do you know Didwell, of Brocksopp?"

"I have a slight acquaintance with him."

"Then you've a slight acquaintance with a remarkably sharp character, and one who never misses a chance for his party. It will be a tremendous fight, sir, this next election," said Mr. Gould, warming up, placing all his olive stones in a row, and charging at them with his dessert-knife;

"they'll do all they can to beat us, and we shall have to do all we know to hold our own. When I say 'we,' of course I reckon you as a Conservative?"

"I—I have no political opinions. I take no interest in politics," said Joyce, absently. Mr. Creswell, from any but a domestic point of view, could not rouse an emotion in him.

"Don't you indeed! No political opinions! Ah! I remember when I hadn't any myself! That was—dear me!" and the astute parliamentary agent made a new pattern with the olive-stones, while his thoughts went back for a quarter of a century, to a time when he was under articles in Gray's Inn, used to frequent the Cyder Cellars, and was desperately in love with the Columbine of the Adelphi.

They went to the drawing-room soon afterwards. There was some instrumental music of the most approved firework style, and then Captain Frampton growled away at "Il Balen" with great success, and Joyce was just making up his mind to slip away, when Lady Caroline Mansergh sat down to the piano, and began to sing one of Moore's melodies to her own accompaniment. Ah! surely it is not laying oneself open to the charge of fogeyism to grieve over the relegation to the "Canterbury" of those charming ballads, wherein the brightest fancies were wedded to the sweetest sounds? If the "makers of the people's ballads" possess the power ascribed to them, there is, indeed, but little cause to wonder at the want of tone prevalent in a society which, for its drawing-room music, alternates between mawkish sentimentality and pot-house slang! When the first note of Lady Caroline's rich contralto voice rippled round the room, the guests standing about in small knots, coffee cup in hand, gradually sidled towards the piano, and ere she had sung the first stanza even Colonel Tapp's ventriloquial grumbling—he was discussing army estimates and the infernal attempts at cheeseparing of the Manchester school—was hushed. No one in the room was uninfluenced by the singer's spell, on no one had it so much effect as on Walter Joyce, who sat far away in the shadow of a curtain, an open photograph-book unheeded on his knee, drinking in the melody, and surrendering himself entirely to its potent charms. His eyes were fixed on the singer, now on her expressive face, now on her delicate little hands as they went softly wandering over the keys, but his thoughts were very, very far away. Far away in the old school garden, with its broad grass-plots, its ruddy wall, its high elm-trees, frame-like bordering the sweet domestic picture. Far away with Marian, the one love which his soul had ever known. Ah, how visibly he saw her then, the trim figure noiselessly moving about on its domestic errands, the bright beryl eyes upturned in eager questioning towards his own, the delicate hand with its long thin fingers laid in such trusting confidence on his arm. What ages it seemed since he had seen her! what a tremendous gulf seemed ever to separate them! And what prospect was there of that union for which they had so fervently prayed? The position he was to gain—where was that? What progress had he made in—"friends once linked together, I've seen around me fall, like leaves in wintry weather!" Ay, ay, the poor old dominie, at rest—better there than anywhere else, better to be out of the strife and the worry, and—good Heavens! was this what he had promised her; was this the courage on which he had prided himself, and which was to carry him through the world! "Brava! brava! Oh, thank you so very much, Lady Caroline. Mayn't we hope for another? Thanks, so much!" The song was over; the singer had left the piano. He caught one glance as he bowed and murmured his thanks. He could not stand it any longer, his thoughts had completely unmanned him, and he longed for solitude. If it were rude to leave the party he must brave even Lady Hetherington's wrath, but he would try and get away unobserved. Now, while the hum of admiration was still going on, and while people were gathering round Lady Caroline, was the opportunity. He availed himself of it, slipped away unperceived, and hurried to his own room.

He closed the door behind him, turned the key, and flung himself on to the bed, in the dark. He felt that he could contain himself no longer, and now that he was alone and unseen, there was no further reason to restrain the tears which had been welling into his eyes, and now flowed unchecked down his cheeks. He was a man of nervous temperament, highly-wrought susceptibilities, and acute sympathies, which had been over-excited during the evening by the story of Tom Creswell's death, his own recollections of his past life, and the weird thought-compelling power of Lady Caroline's music. There was no special occasion for these tears; he knew nothing had happened to Marian, nothing—no, nothing had happened calculated in any way to interpose any—any barrier between them; his position was pleasant, his pro-

spects brighter than he could have hoped—and yet, and yet! How very strange that she had not written lately, unless, indeed, she had been completely absorbed by ministering to the trouble round her. Walter could easily picture to himself the comfort she must have been to all, in the midst of the desolation which had fallen upon that hitherto prosperous house; he recollected how, even in the midst of her own deep sorrow, she had been able, at the time of her father's death, to rouse her mother from the lethargic state of grief into which she had fallen; and if Marian could do that then, while her own heart was bleeding, how much more would she be able to bestir herself now, when neither for the dead, nor for those left behind, had she anything but a kindly interest? And might not this sad event prove a useful lesson to her; might it not prove the one thing needful to render her a perfect character, showing her, as it would, that there are worse misfortunes than poverty, and that grief can slip in behind the shields of wealth and position, and abase the heads of their possessors to the dust? That longing for money and worship of position was the only blot in Marian's character, as seen by Walter Joyce's eyes, and if this accident led to its eradication, it would not have been without its beneficent purpose.

He rose from the bed, and felt his way towards his dressing-table. As he was groping for the matches, his hand fell upon an unopened letter. From Marian, without a doubt; he felt his heart throbbing; at once he struck a light and looked hurriedly for the familiar writing. No, not from Marian! Totally unlike her square neatly written notes; a large blue letter, directed in a straggling hand, and awkwardly folded. Though Joyce was disappointed and vexed for an instant, he quickly recovered himself, and he took the letter up and smiled at it pleasantly, for he had recognised the style and the writing, and he knew that it had come from old Jack Byrne.

Thus it ran:

"London, Thursday.

"My Dear Boy. You'll wonder I haven't answered that capital letter you sent me, giving a description of Westhope and its people, and your life there. You'll wonder, because you are young; when you're as old as I am you won't wonder at anything, except when you sometimes find a man tell the truth; but you shouldn't wonder then, because it would only be an accident. I am very glad that you seem to be so comfortable among the swells, but I never had much fear about it. I know them, root and branch, the whole lot, though I'm only an old bird-stuffer; but I'm like Ulysses, I've seen men and cities, and used my eyes—used 'em so much that, by Jove, I don't think they'll last me much longer—at least for the fine work in my business. What was I saying? Oh, I see; I know the swells, and I know that if they see a man respect himself they always respect him. All of 'em, sir; don't make any mistake about it. All of 'em, the most ineffable transparencies, who think you're sewn up and stuffed in quite a different way from themselves, the kindly noodles, and the clever people—for there are clever people, a few, even among swells—all like to see a man respect himself. You'll have found out by this time, if you did not know it before, that Lord Hetherington is one of the kindly noodles, and one of the best of 'em. He can't help believing in his blood, and his lineage, and his descent from those bloodthirsty, ignorant, old ruffians of the middle ages, whose only good was that they killed other bloodthirsty, ignorant, old ruffians, and he can't help being a fool, that being the penalty which a man generally has to pay for being able to boast of his descent; but he is harmless and kind-hearted. How goes on the book? Take my advice, and make it light and anecdotical. Boil down those old chronicles and parchments of the great West family, and serve them up in a soufflet. And don't let your heavy pedagogical style be seen in the dish! If you do, everybody will know at once that my lord has had nothing to do with the book on the title-page of which his name figures. I suppose it wouldn't do to put in any bad spelling, would it? That would be immensely reassuring to all who know Lord Hetherington, as to the real authorship.

"And my lady, how is that grande dame? I've grinned a hundred times, thinking over your face of indignation and disgust at the manner in which she received you that day we went to call on their magnificences at the Clarendon, with a view to your engagement! How does she treat you now? Has she ordered you to black her boots yet, or to wash her lap-dog, or to take your meals with her lady's maid? Or, more likely still, has she never taken any notice at all of you, having no idea of your existence, beyond the fact that there is a writing-machine—you—in the library, as there is a churn in the dairy and a mangle in the laundry! And does this behaviour gird you, and do you growl inwardly about

it, or are you a philospher, and able to despise anything that a woman can do to hurt you? If the latter, come up to town at once, and I will exhibit you in a show as a lusus naturæ, and we will divide the profits and make our fortunes.

"And while on that subject, Walter, let me drop my old cynical fun, and talk to you for a minute honestly and with all the affection of which my hard, warped, crabbed nature is capable. I can write to you what I couldn't say to you, my boy, and you won't think me gushing when I tell you that my heart had been tight locked and barred for years before I saw you, and that I don't think I've been any the worse since you found a key somehow—God knows how—to unlock it. Now then, after that little bit of maudlin nonsense, to what I was going to say. The first time we were ever in my old room together talking over your future, I proposed to start you for Australia. You declined, saying that you couldn't possibly leave England, and when I pressed you about the ties that bound you here, and learned that you had no father or mother, you boggled, and hesitated, and broke down, and I was obliged to help you out of your sentence by changing the subject. Do you remember all that? And do you think I didn't know what it all meant? That marvellous stupidity of young men, which prevents them from thinking that any one has ever been young, but themselves! I knew that it meant that you were in love, Walter, and that's what I want to ask you about. From that hour until the day we pressed hands in farewell at Euston-square, you never alluded to her again! In the long letter which you sent me, and which now lies before me, a letter treating fully of your present and your future life, there is no word of her! Don't think I am surprised at a fine, generous, hearty, hopeful young fellow not giving his love-confidence to a withered, dried-up old skittle like myself; I never expected it; I should not mention it now, save that I fear that the state of affairs can be scarcely satisfactory between you, or you, who have placed your whole story unreservedly before me, would not have hidden this most important part of it. Nor do I want to ask you for a confidence which you have not volunteered. I only wish you to examine the matter calmly, quietly, and under the exercise of your common sense, of which you have plenty. And if it is unsatisfactory in any way—*give it up!* Yes, Walter, give it up! It sounds harshly, ridiculously, I know, but it is honest advice, and if I had had any one to say it to me, years and years ago, and to enforce my adoption of it, I should have been a very different man. Believe in no woman's love, Walter, trust no woman's looks, or words, or vows. 'First of all would I fly from the cruel madness of love,' says Mr. Tennyson, and he is right. Cruel madness, indeed! we laugh at the wretched lunatic who dons a paper crown, and holds a straw for a sceptre, while all the time we are hugging our own tinsel vanities, and exulting in our own sham state! That's where the swells have the pull, my boy! They have no nonsense about mutual love, and fitness, and congeniality, and all that stuff, which is fitted for nothing but Valentine-mongers and penny romancists; they are not very wise, but they know that the dominant passion in a man's heart is admiration of beauty, the dominant passion in a woman's is ambition, and they go quietly into the mart and arrange the affair, on the excellent principle of barter. When I was your age I could not believe in this, had high hopes and aspirations, and scouted the idea of woman's inconstancy—went on loving, and hoping, and trusting, from month to month, and from year to year, wore out my youth and my freshness and my hope, and was then flung aside and discarded, the victim of 'better opportunities' and 'improved position.' Oh, Lord! I never intended to open my mouth about this, but if you ever want to hear the whole story, I'll tell you some day. Meanwhile, think over these hints, my boy! Life's too short and too hard as it is, and—verbum sap.

"Most probably you'll never take any further notice of me, after that. If you have corns, I must have been hard and heavy upon them, and you'll curse my impertinence; if you haven't you'll think me the prosiest of old bores. Just like me. I see plainly that I must have made a mess of it, which ever way it turns up.

"You tell me to send you news. Not much about; but what there is, encouraging and good for the cause. There is very little doubt that at the general election, which will come off in a few months, we shall be stronger by far than we ever expected, and shall cut the combs of some of those aristocrats and plutocrats very close indeed. There is a general feeling that blood and money bags have divided the spoil too long, and that worth and intellect may be allowed a chance of being brought

into play. There are three or four men at the club, whom you know, and who are tolerably certain of seats, and who, if once they get the opportunity of making their voices heard in Parliament, will show the world of what stuff real Englishmen consist. Who do you think is helping us immensely? Shimmer, he of Bliffkins's! He has got an engagement on the Comet—a new journal which has just started in our interest, and he is writing admirably. A good deal of Lemprière's dictionary, and Bohn's quotations, and Solomon's proverbs, mixed up with a dashing incisive style and sound Saxon English, has proved immensely telling. People are buying the Comet everywhere, and Shimmer's salary has been twice raised, and he has been applied to for his photograph. He does not come much to Bliffkins's now, greatly to old Wickwar's relief. The old gentleman has expressed his opinion that since Robsperry (he is supposed to have meant Robespierre) there has been no such sanguinary democrat as Shimmer. When will you come back to us, Walter? I look at the place where I used to see you sitting, before I ever spoke to you; I sit and stare at it now until I feel my eyes—— D—d old fool!

"Good-bye, boy. Let me hear from you again soon. You know what you promised, if ever you wanted money, or anything.

"J. B.

"Opened again, to say Shimmer has been here, inquiring after you. Comet people want a correspondent at Berlin—special and important. S. thinks you'll do. Will you go?

"J. B."

The company had long since departed from Westhope; the family had long since retired to rest; dim lights glimmered here and there in the windows; but Walter Joyce remained sitting on the side of his bed, with Jack Byrne's open letter in his hand. When he wrote it, the old man little thought what a field of painful speculation he had laid open for its recipient.

THE PACIFIC RAILROAD.

It is only at this late day, that people are beginning to comprehend and appreciate what the Pacific Railroad really is. The enterprise, aside from its sentimental aspects, is one of such importance to civilisation in general, and to the commerce of the whole world in particular, that a familiarity with its leading features cannot fail to interest as well as instruct a reading and commercial public like that of England. Considering both the distance which that railroad is to traverse, and the difficulties of nature with which it has to contend, it is no exaggeration to pronounce it the greatest enterprise which has been set on foot, since the railway locomotive was invented. Rumours have come faintly to us of the immense height, the awful sublimity, the rugged and apparently inaccessible crags and cliffs, of the Rocky Mountains; but now that the every-day traveller is brought by steam to their base, the descriptions become more distinct and awe-inspiring, and the natural grandeur of the American Far West dawns clearly upon us. It is the task of the Pacific Railroad, after toiling for thousands of miles, to reach the lowest spurs of the Rocky Mountains, to penetrate their gigantic passes, to subdue the rugged obstacles which those vast mountain solitudes present to the ingenuity of civilisation, and to emerge into the Golden Land beyond.

The magnitude of the undertaking, the success of which is now as certain as anything human can be, may be in some degree estimated by its extent. From Omaha, the extreme eastern terminus of the road, to Sacramento, California, the western terminus, the distance is one thousand seven hundred and twenty miles. But if you make the starting point at New York—for the great railway line will virtually be from New York to Sacramento—the distance between the Atlantic and the Pacific termini will be somewhat over three thousand five hundred miles. How many times this multiplies the distance between Land's End and John O'Groat's, or how many times it multiplies the distance between Paris and St. Petersburg, the English reader may easily work out. Of this three thousand and odd miles to be traversed between New York and Sacramento, eighteen hundred were already completed—namely, as far as Omaha, on the Missouri River—before the Pacific Railway was begun. Regular travel and traffic were already going on, half across the continent. Omaha is one of those places which grow from obscurity to fame, over night. Even after the Pacific Railroad project had been mooted for years, no one had ever heard of Omaha. It is situated on the Missouri River, a few miles north of the junction of the Missouri with the Platte. Just across the former stream, on a bold eminence, stands a settlement of very old date, called Council Bluffs. Everybody thought that Council Bluffs would be the grand junction of the eastern lines with the Pacific—the link to connect California with her distant sister States. The fickleness of human, especially of land speculating, fortune, however, decreed that the people of Council Bluffs should witness, across the river, the securing of the prize by the mushroom settlement of Omaha. It was decided to make that place the terminus of the great thoroughfare to the Pacific; accordingly Omaha became famous, and grew wonderfully, and was besieged by the great speculators of the republic. After a long discussion as to the practicability of carrying a railway through

the vast wild solitudes of Nevada, Colorado, and Utah, and still worse, over the bleak and savage passes of the Rocky Mountains, Congress finally granted to the present company, a charter to make the road, in the summer of 1862. A year passed, and the summer of 1863 found the company still in a state of imperfect organisation. During the following winter, however, its arrangements were being advanced; its boards, officers, and engineers were chosen; and sufficient capital was procured to commence operations. Fifteen directors, with five government directors, undertook to superintend the project. It was only in January, 1866, that the first rails were laid down at Omaha; in January, 1867, three hundred and seven miles had been completed; a year later, the rails had crept westward some five hundred and forty miles; on the first of January, 1869, the extent of the eastern line (running westward from Omaha) had reached one thousand miles. Meanwhile the Central Pacific Railroad—acting in concert with the Union Pacific Railroad, and constructing the lines from Sacramento eastward towards the Rocky Mountains at the same time that the line already described was approaching the mountains on the other side—had by the first of January, 1869, completed about four hundred miles. Thus, of the grand route from Omaha to Sacramento, adding together the work completed on both sides of the mountains, the first of January of the present year, saw one thousand four hundred miles finished and fit for travel; leaving only about four hundred more to be completed. If, as the company promises and as now seems certain, the line be opened for traffic, from end to end, by July the first, 1869, only three years and a half will have been occupied in the actual construction of this immense work. When the line is once open and in active operation, the traveller may reach San Francisco from New York, within a week, and may accomplish his journey from London to San Francisco in a little over a fortnight, while the time of communication between the American Atlantic seaboard and China will be reduced by nearly a month.

The project of a great highway across the American continent, is not a recent one, but is even anterior to the invention of railway locomotion. As long ago as the time of President Jefferson—when the republic had only been founded sixteen years—the ambition to belt the continent with a great road which should connect the two oceans, had sprung up. Public attention had already been called to the magnificent lands and rumoured treasures of the Far West; and the dream of a golden Colorado, which had inspired Cortes and his adventurous followers, still lived among the Anglo-Saxon settlers, and was destined, in our own time, to be fulfilled by the wonderful discovery of the Californian mines. The purchase of Louisiana from the French, effected by President Jefferson, opened to the then young American view, a long vista of wild but precious territory; awoke the ambition to stretch the Republic to the Western seas; and gave a great stimulus to enterprises of emigration and "back-woods" settlement. The government sent an expedition up the Missouri River; the ostensible object being to treat with the Indians, and to transfer their allegiance from France to the United States; the real object to discover if a highway, Rocky Mountain-ward, were possible. The officers of the expedition returned East with a glorious and thrilling story. They had followed the magnificently wide and wild Missouri, almost to its source in the mountains; they had crossed the ravines and gorges, and had reached the sources of the Columbia; they had followed the course of the Columbia, until the shining waters of the Pacific bounded their view in the far horizon. Jefferson, in character cool-blooded and matter-of-fact, was for once all aglow with the ravishing descriptions of the West which Louis and Clark brought back. He foresaw for America, a destiny far grander than even that grand destiny which he had pictured to himself, as belonging to the original British colonies. And, inspiring the community with sanguine words which rarely came from his lips, he and his successors devoted themselves to the great object of opening the West to civilisation, of penetrating to the Pacific, and establishing American enterprise and commerce on the Western as on the Eastern ocean.

Gradually, by successive acquisitions of territory, the American government succeeded in obtaining possession of the immense tract, lying between the Mississippi, and the Pacific. While these acquisitions were being made, came the invention of railways. Ever since the time when the first trains ran, a communication by rail with the Pacific has been mooted in America. At first the idea seemed visionary and absurd. The Rocky Mountains seemed an obstacle, impossible to be overcome; to establish a line of railway across a solitary tract more than two thousand miles in width, where the only inhabitants were hordes of savage aborigines, seemed the height of folly. We are told that some twenty-five years ago, a New York merchant, whose name was Asa Whitney, while doubling Cape Horn en route for home, matured a plan for the construction of a railroad from the "village" of St. Louis to the Pacific. His scheme appears to have been no castle in the air. It was a thoroughly considered, long studied project. He worked out the problem slowly and with difficulty, looking only at its sober practicability, and shutting his eyes to the sentimental phases of his subject. But, the problem once solved, the possibility of the idea once demonstrated, Whitney gave way to his enthusiasm, and became a monomaniac on the subject of a Pacific Railroad. On his arrival in New York, he boldly announced his scheme, and, although pronounced with the unanimity of popular inexperience a visionary enthusiast, he began to lecture on it here, and there, and everywhere. He wrote to the papers, made

speeches, and besieged members of Congress at the national capital: all, apparently, in vain. Soon after, the Mexican war broke out, public attention became absorbed in it, and it seemed that even the slight headway which Whitney and his little band of coadjutors had made, would be lost. But the cause grew in silence, as many great causes in this world do grow. In 1850, the war being then finished, and the gold mines of California just discovered, the subject of a Pacific Railroad came, to all appearance, very suddenly, to maturity. Californian gold was a wondrous attraction westward; might we not reach it, travelling by steam, at the rate of forty miles an hour instead of four? Early in this important year 1850, a convention—the inevitable resort of Americans when anything of a public nature is to be done—assembled at Philadelphia to debate the subject of a Pacific Railroad, and if considered feasible, to organise a plan for carrying the project into effect. This gave an authority to, and elicited an interest in the matter, which attracted the attention of Congress. And now came the era of expeditions and surveys. General Fremont won the nomination to the Presidency, mainly by the indefatigable zeal of his journey across the Rocky Mountains. Books began to multiply, bearing on the subject. Congress published, at the national expense, huge folios giving descriptions and charts of the official surveys. After repeated attempts to form a practical project—the difficulties in the way thereof being many, and not the least, the difficulty of choosing a route which should be acceptable to both North and South—a bill was finally passed through Congress in 1862 which indicated the route over which the road has now been built. It passes from Omaha up the valley of the Platte, and so crossing Colorado and Utah, reaches the foot of the Rocky Mountains on the Eastern side. On the other side it starts from Sacramento, the second city of California (which lies some seventy-five miles north-west of San Francisco), and thence crosses California and Nevada in a north-westerly direction. It being evident that neither the government alone, nor a private company alone, could accomplish the design, both were joined together in it. The government gave authority to the company to issue heavy mortgage bonds; made the necessary grants of western public lands; provided for the building of convenient branches, connecting the chief settlements of Kansas and southern Colorado with the main line; and reserved for itself postal and military rights on the road. It granted also certain subsidies to the company; agreed to provide sixteen thousand dollars for each mile laid down between the Missouri to the mountains; and, when the construction became more difficult, by reason of the necessity of ascending the spurs and penetrating the passes, thirty-two thousand dollars and forty-eight thousand dollars per mile. These subsidies were paid in United States six per cent bonds.

The four hundred miles of railway remaining to be completed are by far the most formidable of all. Each end of the railway has reached the base of the Rocky Mountains; it remains to conquer the mountains themselves. Still, nature does not, even in that hitherto untraversed region, show herself all unkindly; in some places, according to one of the surveyors, she seems even to have "prepared the way for the locomotive." The authorities of the company promise that the grade in only one locality shall exceed ninety feet to the mile, and that such grades as these shall extend but a short distance. The ascent on both sides proves to be much more gradual than had been supposed. The abruptest and steepest part is on the western slope, in the passes of the famous Sierra Nevada; here there is a rise, within the limit of one hundred miles, of something over seven thousand feet. The highest grade necessary in the whole route—the exception exceeding ninety feet—will be about one hundred and sixteen feet to the mile, and it is but three miles long; in England itself there are higher comparative grades than this; and we think the railway over Mont Cenis far exceeds it.

The science of railway engineering, which has made so wonderful a progress within the past few years, appears to be acquiring a power which no obstructions of nature can successfully oppose; and as far as the *construction* of the Pacific Railroad is concerned, its entire practicability is demonstrated. But, although the beauties and advantages of the completed railway are commonly painted couleur de rose, it is not probable that completion will put an end to the difficulties of the route. The Mormons, whose colony is now flourishing and increasing in the heart of far western Utah, had begun to flatter themselves that they were established in a solitude, which neither gentile, nor heathen, would reach. They had tilled the land, and brought it under cultivation, and had revelled in the idea of a great and thriving system, to be the product of their labours, and to be built on the foundations of their faith. Now, the Pacific Railroad has not only approached, but has reached, their very doors; bringing the tide of gentile civilisation, and the hubbub of the un-Mormon world, straight in upon them. Whatever obstacles they can raise against the railway they will surely raise. It will be no light difficulty in the way of the future railway to encounter the grim hostility of so large and fanatical a community.

It will not be easy to protect a line of railway passing through two thousand consecutive miles of wild solitudes, from the guerilla onslaughts of the Indian tribes. True, the Indian is slowly disappearing from his traditional hunting grounds; but the tribes that still survive, have in no degree lost the old Indian dread of civilisation, the old Indian ferocity against the white man. They may still come down upon the railway, in the heart of those stupendous forests; and it must be, in the first few years at least, through varied, and

unseen, and suddenly occurring dangers that the "great through trains" must pass to and from Sacramento. The evil can only diminish by the westward tide of empire. Cities and commonwealths must and will grow up all along the line; at first they will be fortifications; they will eventually drive back the savage into the northern wilds of Dakota and Montana, into Texas and upper Mexico.

The rapid growth of the west of America has yet to be realised by Americans themselves, as well as by Europeans. On some days, the emigrant waggons which cross the Missouri River on their way to Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, are counted by thousands. These emigrants rumble with difficulty at the rate of four miles an hour, over those vast plains and ravines; how will it be when steam will waft them there with tenfold swiftness? Chicago has ceased to be called a western city; St. Louis looks around and finds, to her surprise, that people are talking of her as standing on the frontier of the west. Omaha, with her wonderful growth, is already a city with lyceums and insurance houses, and has ten times doubled the price of her land. The results flowing to the commerce of the world, when the Pacific Railroad shall be finally opened for traffic, it is hard to estimate. That it will modify to a large extent the courses between the four continents, there seems little doubt. The route by which the merchants of England—to cite a single example—now carry on the ever increasing trade with China and Japan, is a long and difficult one. By the Suez Canal, the quickest route from England to the Orient, British vessels traverse some fourteen thousand miles; when the Pacific Railroad begins to carry on through traffic, the route viâ New York and San Francisco will not only be shorter, but railway travel being substituted across the American continent for water locomotion, it will be proportionably more rapid. A journey from New York to Yokohama will then occupy about a month, and from London to Yokohama about six weeks! It does not seem improbable that the whole, or nearly the whole, of the great European trade with China, Japan, Australia, and Batavia, will pass by the Pacific Railroad across the American continent, and go, through New York, to London and Havre.

The stimulus which this increased propinquity with civilised nations will give to the hitherto exclusive and self-satisfied races of the Orient, may have results as important in moral and political, as in commercial directions. At San Francisco, there is already a considerable section of the city, exclusively inhabited by emigrant Chinese, called the Chinese quarter; this is but the nucleus of a wide spread and fast increasing Oriental colony. On the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains and the magnificent valleys and spurs of Sierra Nevada, may be found suddenly grown hamlets, villages, towns, of emigrant Chinese; and the tide from the East (it is the West, however, there) which is constantly replenishing these novel settlements of the oldest race on the youngest soil in the world, is constantly increasing in its volume. The Japanese, though more backward, are following the example of their neighbours; the trade between the colonists and the home traders is growing and extending to a cosmopolitan importance. Besides a vast swelling in the current of European and American trade with the Orient, we may readily imagine that the settlement of the Far West on either side of its line will bring to light undiscovered mines of gold and silver, and copper and coal, yet lying in the bosom of untrodden fields, and beneath the sands and pebbles of unknown streams. As it is, the route passes directly through the region of central Colorado, where gold mines of great value are now being worked. In the science of making railway travelling not only comfortable, but luxurious, the Americans have recently made many great strides; and all the latest improvements are to be adopted on the Pacific Railroad line. It is intended, that the traveller shall be provided with every convenience for a week's continuous travel.

If you journey from St. Louis to San Francisco, you will enter the train at St. Louis, and you need not leave it until you can see the Pacific rolling at your feet. You may sleep in luxurious state-rooms, your feet cushioned with the best Brussels carpets, your water service complete, your linen of the finest, your toilet conveniences without a want. By day you will have drawing-rooms, where, on the most yielding of sofas and fauteuils, you may lounge the daylight hours away, over books. When hunger calls, you may repair to a sumptuous salle-à-manger, and at a fixed tariff regale yourself with the choicest viands of the season—especially the rich wild game of the western forests—made yet more palatable by genuine Chateau Margaux or Chablis, or the pure young wines of the California hill sides. No comfort to be found in the best American hotels is to be absent; if you emerge from your carriage at a quiet far western station, it will be rather to admire the primeval landscape, and take a glimpse of the recent settlements, than to gobble down a half cooked dinner in a quarter of the time necessary to its consumption. You will have all the delights of the Atlantic voyage without its distresses; and you may actually write your great work of travel, which is to give Europe new light on the western world, en route. And the expense of travelling thus luxuriously, will be less than it now costs the poor emigrant to make his weary way, across the seemingly boundless plains.

No man can say what colossal fortunes lie along the line of the Pacific Railroad. The speculators are there in thousands already; the prophecies of future cities everywhere meet the eye; the old story will again and again be told, of the lucky few and the beggared many. But bright and high above all, shines the hope, that the products of a

now scarcely half tilled continent will, ere long, ameliorate the condition of the poor, who are with us always

WAR BALLOONS.

THE first actual application of a balloon to any military purpose, occurred at Valenciennes, in 1793, and resulted in failure. The garrison, sorely pressed by the English and allied armies, despatched a small parachute (to which was attached a letter addressed to the National Assembly), with a fair breeze blowing towards Paris. About evening the wind changed round, and the balloon fell in the camp of the allies.

About this time a scientific commission had been deputed by the Committee of Public Safety to inquire into various improvements in warlike materiel. Among its members was Guyton-Morveau, who had already made several successful balloon ascents in various parts of France. By him the question of aerostation was brought before the commission, and admitted for consideration: with the proviso, that sulphur should not be employed in the manufacture of the hydrogen gas to be used for inflation. The war had put an end to the importation of sulphur from Sicily, and the powder-mills might feel the effects of a shortened supply. Lavoisier had already shown that hydrogen might be produced by directing a jet of steam upon a surface of red-hot iron, but it remained to be proved whether enough gas could be thus obtained.

A young captain of engineers named Coutelle, then in his twenty-third year, together with Citizens Charles and Conté, were ordered to report upon this matter. Their experiments were conducted in the old Salle des Maréchaux of the Tuileries. By passing several jets of steam through a series of cast-iron pipes filled with iron filings, they succeeded in producing, in a moderate space of time, from five hundred to six hundred cubic feet of hydrogen. Thus the first difficulty was removed.

It was next considered advisable to take the opinion of Jourdan, who had lately succeeded Houchard in the command of the armies of the North, on the military bearings of the question. Coutelle was deputed to lay the matter before him. It affords a curious picture of the state of affairs in the rural districts of France at this time, to find that Coutelle, an officer on duty charged with an important mission, was within an ace of being shot on his road by order of a certain Representative Duquesnoy, who could not be made to understand his explanations: —"Young man," said the Gallic Justice Shallow, "who ever heard of balloons in war? You appear to me a *suspect*, and to set all doubts at rest, I will have you shot!" How the matter was compromised, we are not told; but Coutelle succeeded in reaching the frontier, and in submitting his project to Jourdan: who heartily approved of it, but recommended that the experiments should be continued in Paris, as the state of the frontier forbade their being carried out in a satisfactory manner, in the neighbourhood of the army. Coutelle accordingly returned to Paris, and set about establishing workshops and other requisites at the château of Meudon. A large brick furnace was erected for the manufacture of gas; and a balloon twenty-seven feet (old French measure), or nine mètres, in diameter, with a car capable of holding two persons, was constructed. The weight of the balloon and car (without the aeronauts) was about two and a half hundredweight. Its ascensional power when filled with hydrogen was about five hundredweight, and its cost somewhere about two thousand five hundred francs. The balloon was to be held by two guy-ropes, each two hundred and seventy toises, or four hundred and fifty yards, in length, attached to its equator. A system of signals was established by means of small pendants and burgees, coloured red, white, and yellow, by which orders for hauling the balloon in any particular direction, or for lowering it, or allowing it to rise, could be conveyed from the balloon to the ground. In like manner orders could be transmitted from the ground to the balloon. The practice of sending down reports by means of a guy-rope having proved inconvenient, small bags of sand were provided, in which slips of paper, containing the reports, were to be tied up. Small coloured pendants were attached to each bag, to enable the eye to follow it readily in its fall.

These arrangements having been completed, the balloon was tried in the presence of Monge, Foucroy, and Guyton-Morveau. Several ascents were made by Coutelle to a height of five hundred and forty feet: the balloon being held by five men at each guy, without the slightest mishap.

So satisfactory were these results considered, that a "décret" of April 2nd, 1794, sanctioned the immediate formation of a company of "aérostiers" to be attached to the art (?), and to consist of Coutelle, as captain-commandant, one lieutenant, one sergeant-major, one sergeant, two corporals, and twenty privates. Their weapons were to be sabres and pistols, their uniform was to be dark blue, with the black velvet facings which for more than sixty years had been (like the garter-blue velvet of our own Royal Engineers) a distinguishing badge of the French "corps de génie."

Shortly after its formation, the company was ordered to join the army of the Sambre and Meuse; Conté, who had been associated with Coutelle in the above-related experiment, taking charge of the establishment (now the "Institut Aéronautique") at Meudon.

The aérostiers arrived in camp at Maubeuge on the 3rd of May, the balloon equipage, which followed by easy stages under a small escort, arrived some days later. The ballooners appear to have been at first regarded with some jealousy and a good deal of contempt, by the rest of the army. Coutelle earnestly besought the general that his men might be allowed to take part in a projected sortie on the left bank of the Sambre. Permission was accorded, and two of the corps, an officer and a

private, were wounded. In a moment all was changed. "We returned to camp," wrote Coutelle, "soldiers of the army."

And now the work began in earnest. Furnaces were lighted; the balloon—l'Entreprenant it had been named—was filled in fifty hours; and ascents were made daily. On each occasion Coutelle was accompanied by an officer of the état major. The observations were usually made with the naked eye, as the oscillatory motion of the car was found oftentimes to interfere with the use of a telescope. The Austrians now and then amused themselves by firing at the aeronauts; but without effect. On one occasion a field-piece, placed in ambuscade in an adjoining ravine, opened on the balloon; but likewise without effect.

Presently, the company received orders to join the army under Jourdan, who was moving on Charleroi. L'Entreprenant now performed its first march. The car, with the guy-ropes coiled away in it, was placed on a waggon, which carried also an awning to cover the balloon at night, grapnels wherewith to anchor it, tools, spare ropes, and so forth. The balloon floated over the line of march at a sufficient height to permit of the passage of cavalry and artillery along the road beneath it; it was guided and stayed by twenty ballooners, who marched in Indian file on either side of the road, each man having a running tackle made fast to the balloon, of which the end was coiled round his waist. This balloon-guiding was no child's play. Not only had the men to contend with the ascensional power of the machine—which, as before said, was considerable—but also, and in a far greater degree, with the wind: to which the balloon presented a surface of some thirty feet in diameter. Again, without great vigilance and much judicious handling of the running gear, puffs of wind would carry the balloon against passing objects, or beat it down and bump it along the ground, to the serious detriment of its gas-retaining properties. But, despite all obstacles, the cortége arrived safely at Charleroi on June 22nd, having left Maubeuge at noon on the 19th. On the 26th occurred the battle of Fleurus, during which the balloon was eight hours in the air, observing, sometimes upon one point, sometimes upon another. The wind being high, thirty horses—fifteen to each guy-rope—were attached to it (how we are not told) to aid its movements from one part of the field to another. Morlot, one of the generals of division, was two hours with Coutelle, observing the Austrians from the car of the balloon; Guyton-Morveau, who was present at the battle, writing on the following day to the Committee of Public Safety, observed: "I have had the satisfaction of seeing the general approve the use of this machine of war." Carnot also wrote to one of his colleagues: "The balloon is an important aid that must not be neglected."

About this time, there occurred to the balloon, two accidents, which may be cited as examples of the dangers to which it was constantly exposed. A puff of wind drove a splinter of wood into the lower portion of the machine, and caused a slight escape of gas. Another unexpected gust of wind drove the balloon against a tree, ripping open the envelope. The balloon had then to be sent back to the furnaces at Maubeuge for repair, and Coutelle returned to Paris, to superintend the organisation of an additional company of aérostiers. Eventually, l'Entreprenant (having been safely carried across the Meuse with the aid of boats) joined the army near Aix-la-Chapelle, where new furnaces were built. It rendered important services at the battle of Chartreuse, and subsequently took part in the battle of Aldenhoven, at the capture of Bonn, and at the operations before Ehrenbreitstein. Here the Austrians attacked it with musketry and shells, but without damaging it.

The second company of ballooners were sent, in charge of Coutelle, with another balloon, named le Télémaque, to join the army of the Rhine. Coutelle's letters give a graphic picture of the nature of their duties, which, from the advanced season, had become more arduous than ever.

"I received orders," he writes on one occasion, "to make a reconnaissance of Mayence. I accordingly posted myself between our lines and the town, at about half-cannon shot distance. The wind was very high, so, to counteract its effects as far as lay in my power, I ascended alone, with two hundred pounds additional buoyancy. I was at a height of five hundred mètres, when three successive gusts dashed me to the ground with such violence that several portions of the car were smashed to bits. Each time, the balloon darted up again with so much force that sixty-four men—thirty-two at each guy-rope—were dragged to some distance. Had the guys been made fast to grapnels, as had been suggested to me, they must infallibly have given way. . . . The wind lulled a little after a while, and I was enabled to count the number of guns."

Again he writes: "The enemy's soldiers were fully persuaded that every movement of theirs was observed by us. A like idea prevailed among our own men, who had by this time discovered in the ballooners a novel sort of courage, which gained their confidence and won their admiration. In our marches, which were rendered terribly fatiguing by the constant vigilance they demanded, forbidding any man to quit even for an instant the ropes holding the balloon, we frequently found refreshments awaiting our arrival in camp. Oftentimes, too, en route, the men of the tirailleurs would bring us their rations of wine."

A violent fever, caught during these operations, obliged Coutelle to give up the command of the second company to his lieutenant; on the very first night after the passage of the Rhine, le Télémaque broke loose, and was so seriously injured as to become unserviceable.

Some time afterwards, l'Entreprenant, which was at Frankfort, was found riddled with balls. The mischief was assigned, by rumour, to the

ballooners themselves, who, it was said, had become disgusted with the hardships to which they were exposed. It was, repaired, but fell into the hands of the enemy at Wurtzburg, September 17th, 1796.

Meanwhile Coutelle, now a chef de bataillon, had resumed the direction of the Institute at Meudon.

From this period, notwithstanding the importance attached to the subject by the National Assembly, war-ballooning appears to have fallen into disuse. Whether or no this result may be attributed to want of zeal on the part of the officers who succeeded Coutelle in charge of the companies, we cannot say. The experiment itself had certainly proved a success. In a line of operations extending over one hundred and fifty French leagues, along the Sambre, Meuse, and Rhine, from Maubeuge by Charleroi, Liege, Aix-la-Chapelle, Cologne, Bonn, Coblentz, Mayence, and Mannheim to Strasbourg, the two balloons had been available whenever and wherever they were needed. For this service three permanent establishments had been found amply sufficient. Experience had also proved that the balloons would retain their gas for a considerable length of time. L'Entreprenant, filled at Maubeuge on June 18th, was fit for duty at Namur at the end of July. Neither had the difficulties attendant on the transport of the machines, when inflated, proved as great as had been anticipated. Whether passing in or out of fortified towns, across ramparts and ditches, or guided by men along the line of march, towed by horses, as at Fleurus, or by men in boats, as at the passage of the Meuse, the difficulties had never proved insurmountable; while the important nature of the services rendered on many occasions were allowed by friends and foes. Nevertheless the service fell into disrepute. Coutelle, now a colonel, had returned to duty with the engineer corps; and the establishment at Meudon, deprived of its chief, like the "compagnies aérostiers," soon ceased to exist.

Although balloons were not used in the campaign in Italy, in 1796, as is sometimes erroneously asserted, nor indeed in any of the Napoleonic campaigns, Buonaparte would seem to have been alive to their military importance. On the departure of the expedition to Egypt in 1798, he commissioned Conté to form a corps of ballooners out of the remains of the "compagnies aérostiers." Their equipage, however (which had been provided on an extensive scale), fell into the hands of the British cruisers; and the only service they performed was the construction of a huge tri-coloured Montgolfier, which was sent up at Cairo on the 9th "Vendemiare," 1799 (the fête day of the Republic), and disappeared in the desert, to the great edification of crowds of the faithful.

On the recommendation of a commission of engineer officers, it was now directed that the study of aerostation should form part of the course at the engineer establishments at Metz, to which the remains of the balloon Télémaque, were made over, and where, says M. le Colonel Augoval, "they long remained, a mouldering enigma amongst the college stores."

L'Entreprenant, which had also found its way back into French hands, was sold with the other effects of the Institut Aéronautique, at Meudon, in 1802. It then became the property of the English aeronaut, Robertson. Subsequently, and under a new name, it figured, we believe, at Vauxhall Gardens, and other public places.

OUT OF WORK.

The winter is round again—
Will winter and want ne'er part?—
And the frost is back on the pane,
And the frost is back at the heart.
There's starlight up in the sky,
And there's firelight over the way;
But the stars are all too high,
And fires are for those that pay.
I tramp in the cold grey morn,
I tramp when the daylight lags,
'Till my bleeding feet are torn,
On these merciless London flags;
And I stare as the folk go by,
Their faces so cold and hard,
That I think of the stones that lie
In the hell of the workhouse yard.
"Dear soul I have nothing to give,"
Is all that the best reply;
"How is it you care to live,
There is nothing to do but to die."
And others scoff as they walk—
"Oh, yes! we know you of old;
You have plenty of pitiful talk,
And brass is the beggar's gold."
Yet I ask neither silver nor bread,
I merely seek for a wage;
But somehow, they say, the markets are dead,
And it's only the fault of the age!
Still I read that far away,
Somewhere in the glowing west,
There are realms without rent to pay,
And the labourer's lot is the best.
And oft in the long dark hours
I dream of the tales they tell,
Till the breath of the prairie flowers
Steals over me like a spell.
And I smile on my own broad farm,
While the children around me call,
"Now, father, we fear no harm,
There's room enough for us all."
But I wake too soon to my pains,
And, waking, I hear once more
The din of the market wains,
Heaven-laden with rich men's store.
They pass with the music of birds,
And I hear men shout as they go;
But the very cheer of their words
Falls into my heart like snow.
Still I ask for the goods of none,
And I ask for the alms of none;
But murmur, "Thy will be done,
If it be that I starve alone."
For I trust that the good God knows—
And they tell me His ways are just—
That the winter will bring its woes,
That some must fall in the dust.
Yet ever I tramp and strive
For the labour that will not come,
For the loaf that keeps alive,
And the hope that makes a home.
Are they never to come again?
Ah, me! for that land in the west.
Is there none will lead the train
That takes us away to our rest?

We are willing, longing, to go,
And the far land calls in her strength,
"Come, children, why perish ye so?
Come lie in my bosom at length."
Yet ever the cry goes up,
Till it sounds as a tale that is told—
"Dear mother, this agony-cup
Is more than our hands can hold."
We yearn for your goodly dower,
And over the Western Sea,
The gospel of youth and power
Is bidding us all be free.
But how shall we quit our place,
Though it's only these icy flags;
And how shall we win the grace
That is waiting even for rags?
Ah, me! with hearts so strong,
And good men high in the land,
To think that the taint of the pauper throng
Seems worse than the felon's brand!
Yet surely the worst is past,
We have waited so long in vain,
That our very souls are aghast,
And hope is akin to pain.
Then back to the workhouse gate,
For there's starlight still in the sky,
And they tell me England is great,
With thousands worse off than I!

NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES.

By Charles Dickens.

ON AN AMATEUR BEAT.

It is one of my fancies that even my idlest walk must always have its appointed destination. I set myself a task before I leave my lodging in Covent Garden on a street expedition, and should no more think of altering my route by the way, or turning back and leaving a part of it unachieved, than I should think of fraudulently violating an agreement entered into with somebody else. The other day, finding myself under this kind of obligation to proceed to Limehouse, I started punctually at noon, in compliance with the terms of the contract with myself to which my good faith was pledged.

On such an occasion, it is my habit to regard my walk as my Beat, and myself as a higher sort of Police Constable doing duty on the same. There is many a Ruffian in the streets whom I mentally collar and clear out of them, who would see mighty little of London, I can tell him, if I could deal with him physically.

Issuing forth upon this very Beat, and following with my eyes three hulking garotters on their way home: which home I could confidently swear to be within so many yards of Drury Lane, in such a narrowed and restricted direction (though they live in their lodging quite as undisturbed as I in mine), I went on duty with a consideration which I respectfully offer to the new Chief Commissioner—in whom I thoroughly confide as a tried and efficient public servant. How often (thought I) have I been forced to swallow in Police reports, the intolerable stereotyped pill of nonsense how that the Police Constable informed the worthy magistrate how that the associates of the Prisoner did at that present speaking dwell in a Street or Court which no man dared go down, and how that the worthy magistrate had heard of the dark reputation of such Street or Court, and how that our readers would doubtless remember that it was always the same Street or Court which was thus edifyingly discoursed about, say once a fortnight. Now, suppose that a Chief Commissioner sent round a circular to every Division of Police employed in London, requiring instantly the names in all districts of all such much-puffed Streets or Courts which no man durst go down; and suppose that in such circular he gave plain warning: "If those places really exist, they are a proof of Police inefficiency which I mean to punish; and if they do not exist, but are a conventional fiction, then they are a proof of lazy tacit Police connivance with professional crime, which I also mean to punish"—what then? Fictions or realities, could they survive the touchstone of this atom of common sense? To tell us in open court, until it has become as trite a feature of news as the great gooseberry, that a costly Police system such as was never before heard of, has left in London, in the days of steam and gas and photographs of thieves and electric telegraphs, the sanctuaries and stews of the Stuarts! Why, a parity of practice, in all departments, would bring back the Plague in two summers, and the Druids in a century!

Walking faster under my share of this public injury, I overturned a wretched little creature who, clutching at the rags of a pair of trousers with one of its claws, and at its ragged hair with the other, pattered with bare feet over the muddy stones. I stopped to raise and succour this poor weeping wretch, and fifty like it, but of both sexes, were about me in a moment: begging, tumbling, fighting, clamouring, yelling, shivering in their nakedness and hunger. The piece of money I had put into the claw of the child I had overturned, was clawed out of it, and was again clawed out of that wolfish gripe, and again out of that, and soon I had no notion in what part of the obscene scuffle in the mud, of rags and legs and arms and dirt, the money might be. In raising the child, I had drawn it aside out of the main thoroughfare, and this took place among some wooden hoardings and barriers and

ruins of demolished buildings, hard by Temple Bar. Unexpectedly from among them, emerged a genuine Police Constable, before whom the dreadful brood dispersed in various directions: he making feints and darts in this direction and in that, and catching nothing. When all were frightened away, he took off his hat, pulled out a handkerchief from it, wiped his heated brow, and restored the handkerchief and hat to their places, with the air of a man who had discharged a great moral duty—as indeed he had, in doing what was set down for him. I looked at him, and I looked about at the disorderly traces in the mud, and I thought of the drops of rain and the footprints of an extinct creature, hoary ages upon ages old, that geologists have identified on the face of a cliff; and this speculation came over me: — If this mud could petrify at this moment, and could lie concealed here for ten thousand years, I wonder whether the race of men then to be our successors on the earth could, from these or any marks, by the utmost force of the human intellect, unassisted by tradition, deduce such an astounding inference as the existence of a polished state of society that bore with the public savagery of neglected children in the streets of its capital city, and was proud of its power by sea and land, and never used its power to seize and save them!

After this, when I came to the Old Bailey and glanced up it towards Newgate, I found that the prison had an inconsistent look. There seemed to be some unlucky inconsistency in the atmosphere, that day, for though the proportions of Saint Paul's Cathedral are very beautiful, it had an air of being somewhat out of drawing, in my eyes. I felt as though the cross were too high up, and perched upon the intervening golden ball too far away.

Facing eastward, I left behind me Smithfield and Old Bailey—fire and fagot, condemned Hold, public hanging, whipping through the city at the cart-tail, pillory, branding-iron, and other beautiful ancestral landmarks which rude hands have rooted up, without bringing the stars quite down upon us as yet—and went my way upon my Beat, noting how oddly characteristic neighbourhoods are divided from one another, hereabout, as though by an invisible line across the way. Here, shall cease the bankers and the money-changers; here, shall begin the shipping interest and the nautical instrument shops; here, shall follow a scarcely perceptible flavouring of groceries and drugs; here, shall come a strong infusion of butchers; now, small hosiers shall be in the ascendant; henceforth, everything exposed for sale shall have its ticketed price attached. All this, as if specially ordered and appointed. A single stride at Houndsditch Church, no wider than sufficed to cross the kennel at the bottom of the Canongate, which the Debtors in Holyrood Sanctuary were wont to relieve their minds by skipping over, as Scott relates, and standing in delightful daring of Catchpoles on the free side—a single stride, and everything is entirely changed in grain and character. West of the stride, a table, or a chest of drawers on sale shall be of mahogany and French-polished; East of the stride, it shall be of deal, smeared with a cheap counterfeit resembling lip-salve. West of the stride, a penny loaf or bun shall be compact and self-contained; East of the stride, it shall be of a sprawling and splay-footed character, as seeking to make more of itself for the money. My Beat lying round by Whitechapel Church, and the adjacent Sugar Refineries—great buildings, tier upon tier, that have the appearance of being nearly related to the Dock-Warehouses at Liverpool—I turned off to my right, and passing round the awkward corner on my left, came suddenly on an apparition familiar to London streets afar off.

What London peripatetic of these times has not seen the woman who has fallen forward, double, through some affection of the spine, and whose head has of late taken a turn to one side, so that it now droops over the back of one of her arms at about the wrist? Who does not know her staff, and her shawl, and her basket, as she gropes her way along, capable of seeing nothing but the pavement, never begging, never stopping, for ever going somewhere on no business? How does she live, whence does she come, whither does she go, and why? I mind the time when her yellow arms were nought but bone and parchment. Slight changes steal over her, for there is a shadowy suggestion of human skin on them now. The Strand may be taken as the central point about which she revolves in a half mile orbit. How comes she so far East as this? And coming back too! Having been how much further? She is a rare spectacle in this neighbourhood. I receive intelligent information to this effect from a dog; a lop-sided mongrel with a foolish tail, plodding along with his tail up, and his ears pricked, and displaying an amiable interest in the ways of his fellow-men—if I may be allowed the expression.

After pausing at a porkshop, he is jogging Eastward like myself, with a benevolent countenance and a watery mouth, as though musing on the many excellencies of pork, when he beholds this doubled-up bundle approaching. He is not so much astonished at the bundle (though amazed by that), as at the circumstance that it has within itself the means of locomotion. He stops, pricks his ears higher, makes a slight point, stares, utters a short low growl, and glistens at the nose—as I conceive, with terror. The bundle continuing to approach, he barks, turns tail, and is about to fly, when, arguing with himself that flight is not becoming in a dog, he turns and once more faces the advancing heap of clothes. After much hesitation it occurs to him that there may be a face in it somewhere. Desperately resolving to undertake the adventure and pursue the inquiry, he goes slowly up to the bundle, goes slowly round it, and coming at length upon the human countenance down there where never human countenance should be, gives a yelp of horror, and flies for the East India Docks.

Being now in the Commercial-road district of my Beat, and bethinking myself that Stepney Station is near, I quicken my pace that I may turn out of the road at that point, and see how my small Eastern Star is shining.

The Children's Hospital, to which I gave that name, is in full force. All its beds occupied. There is a new face on the bed where my pretty baby lay, and that sweet little child is now at rest for ever. Much kind sympathy has been here, since my former visit, and it is good to see the walls profusely garnished with dolls. I wonder what Poodles may think of them, as they stretch out their arms above the beds, and stare, and display their splendid dresses. Poodles has a greater interest in the patients. I find him making the round of the beds, like a house-surgeon, attended by another dog—a friend—who appears to trot about with him in the character of his pupil dresser. Poodles is anxious to make me known to a pretty little girl, looking wonderfully healthy, who has had a leg taken off for cancer of the knee. A difficult operation, Poodles intimates, wagging his tail on the counterpane, but perfectly successful, as you see, dear Sir! The patient, patting Poodles, adds with a smile: "The leg was so much trouble to me, that I am glad it's gone." I never saw anything in doggery finer than the deportment of Poodles, when another little girl opens her mouth to show a peculiar enlargement of the tongue. Poodles (at that time on a table, to be on a level with the occasion) looks at the tongue (with his own sympathetically out), so very gravely and knowingly, that I feel inclined to put my hand in my waistcoat pocket, and give him a guinea, wrapped in paper.

On my Beat again, and close to Limehouse Church, its termination, I found myself near to certain "Lead Mills." Struck by the name, which was fresh in my memory, and finding on inquiry that these same Lead Mills were identical with those same Lead Mills of which I made mention when I first visited the East London Children's Hospital and its neighbourhood, as Uncommercial Traveller, I resolved to have a look at them.

Received by two very intelligent gentlemen, brothers, and partners with their father in the concern, and who testified every desire to show their Works to me freely, I went over the Lead Mills. The purport of such works is the conversion of Pig-Lead into White Lead. This conversion is brought about by the slow and gradual effecting of certain successive chemical changes in the lead itself. The processes are picturesque and interesting; the most so, being the burying of the lead at a certain stage of preparation, in pots; each pot containing a certain quantity of acid besides; and all the pots being buried in vast numbers, in layers, under tan, for some ten weeks.

Hopping up ladders and across planks and on elevated perches until I was uncertain whether to liken myself to a Bird, or a Bricklayer, I became conscious of standing on nothing particular, looking down into one of a series of large cocklofts, with the outer day peeping in through the chinks in the tiled roof above. A number of women were ascending to, and descending from, this cockloft, each carrying on the upward journey a pot of prepared lead and acid, for deposition under the smoking tan. When one layer of pots was completely filled, it was carefully covered in with planks, and those were carefully covered with tan again, and then another layer of pots was begun above: sufficient means of ventilation being preserved through wooden tubes. Going down into the cockloft then filling, I found the heat of the tan to be surprisingly great, and also the odour of the lead and acid to be not absolutely exquisite, though I believe not noxious at that stage. In other cocklofts where the pots were being exhumed, the heat of the steaming tan was much greater,

and the smell was penetrating and peculiar. There were cocklofts in all stages; full and empty, half filled and half emptied; strong active women were clambering about them busily; and the whole thing had rather the air of the upper part of the house of some immensely rich old Turk, whose faithful Seraglio were hiding his money because the Sultan or the Pasha was coming.

As is the case with most pulps or pigments so in the instance of this White Lead, processes of stirring, separating, washing, grinding, rolling, and pressing, succeed. Some of these are unquestionably inimical to health; the danger arising from inhalation of particles of lead, or from contact between the lead and the touch, or both. Against these dangers, I found good respirators provided (simply made of flannel and muslin, so as to be inexpensively renewed, and in some instances washed with scented soap), and gauntlet gloves, and loose gowns. Everywhere, there was as much fresh air as windows, well placed and opened, could possibly admit. And it was explained, that the precaution of frequently changing the women employed in the worst parts of the work (a precaution originating in their own experience or apprehension of its ill effects) was found salutary. They had a mysterious and singular appearance with the mouth and nose covered, and the loose gown on, and yet bore out the simile of the old Turk and the Seraglio all the better for the disguise.

At last this vexed white lead having been buried and resuscitated, and heated, and cooled, and stirred, and separated, and washed, and ground, and rolled, and pressed, is subjected to the action of intense fiery heat. A row of women, dressed as above described, stood, let us say, in a large stone bake-house, passing on the baking-dishes as they were given out by the cooks, from hand to hand, into the ovens. The oven or stove, cold as yet, looked as high as an ordinary house, and was full of men and women on temporary footholds, briskly passing up and stowing away the dishes. The door of another oven or stove, about to be cooled and emptied, was opened from above, for the Uncommercial countenance to peer down into. The Uncommercial countenance withdrew itself, with expedition and a sense of suffocation from the dull-glowing heat and the overpowering smell. On the whole, perhaps the going into these stoves to work, when they are freshly opened, may be the worst part of the occupation.

But I made it out to be indubitable that the owners of these lead mills honestly and sedulously try to reduce the dangers of the occupation to the lowest point. A washing-place is provided for the women (I thought there might have been more towels), and a room in which they hang their clothes, and take their meals, and where they have a good fire-range and fire, and a female attendant to help them, and to watch that they do not neglect the cleansing of their hands before touching their food. An experienced medical attendant is provided for them, and any premonitory symptoms of lead-poisoning are carefully treated. Their tea-pots and such things were set out on tables ready for their afternoon-meal, when I saw their room, and it had a homely look. It is found that they bear the work much better than men; some few of them have been at it for years, and the great majority of those I observed were strong and active. On the other hand it should be remembered that most of them are very capricious and irregular in their attendance.

American inventiveness would seem to indicate that before very long White Lead may be made entirely by machinery. The sooner, the better. In the mean time, I parted from my two frank conductors over the mills, by telling them that they had nothing there to be concealed, and nothing to be blamed for. As to the rest, the philosophy of the matter of lead poisoning and workpeople, seems to me to have been pretty fairly summed up by the Irishwoman whom I quoted in my former paper: "Some of them gits lead-pisoned soon, and some of them gets lead-pisoned later, and some but not many niver, and 'tis all according to the constitooshun, Sur, and some constitooshuns is strong and some is weak."

Retracing my footsteps over my Beat, I went off duty.

ANCIENT COLLEGE YOUTHS.

What is an ancient college youth? Before answering this question, it may be as well to say what a college youth (in our present acceptation of the term) is not.

A college youth is not, as might be supposed, of necessity a member of any university; he need belong to no boat club, practise for no eleven, grind for no tripos. He wears no gown, though caps are not unknown to him; but they are the caps of every-day life, and not the academical mortar-board, albeit he may not be unfamiliar with the mortar-board of commerce. He has not to trouble himself about classics; mathematics, save in the rough and ready ways

of business, need not vex his soul. He rarely disturbs himself about law, natural science, metaphysics, or theology. He may be out at what hour he pleases, and yet fear no gating; proctors are only vaguely associated in his mind with Doctors' Commons, though haply he may keep bulldogs of his own; and he looks forward to an occasional rustication with pleasure. His vacations are usually few and brief. He lives in no "quad," though not unfrequently in a court; and though his attendance at church on week days is regular, it is not compulsory. He frequently hears the chimes at midnight, but not in Justice Shallow's sense, for he is of a staid and steady turn.

When the Lord Mayor, in his gingerbread coach, and all the other accompanying guys, who seem annually to mistake their date and come out a few days behind time, deign to exhibit themselves to the irreverent gaze of derisive London; when the braying of the brass bands, the thunderings of the big drums, and the shouts of the assembled multitude are drowned by the merry peals from the clashing bells, high up in the steeples of St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, or St. Michael's, Cornhill, then the ancient youths are hard at work; when you are delivered, cold and damp, ex-steamer, in the port of London, you may, as your cab-horse stumbles up the slippery hill past the queer old church of St. Magnus the Martyr, become distinctly aware of the fact that the ancient youths are in the immediate neighbourhood; and when the night continental express whisks you over the Borough Market, and you look down on the fine pile of St. Mary Overy, you will—especially on certain Tuesdays—have reason to know that the ancient youths are diligently engaged in the pursuit of their studies. For the Ancient Society of College Youths are the ringers of the bells. The churches just mentioned are their chief places of resort, and it is from the wide throats of the massive playthings in their belfries that the harmonious peals of the ancient society of collegians most frequently ring out over the housetops.

For some years a strong desire to make personal acquaintance with the ancient youths possessed our mind. We were not satisfied with the occasional intelligence respecting them to be gleaned from the sporting paper which usually recorded their doings, and which was invariably to the effect, that the following members of the society ascended the tower of St. Somebody's; that a true and complete peal of grandsire triples was rung in such and such a surprisingly short time; that the peal was composed and conducted by Mr. So-and-So, and that the tenor weighed so much. We became anxious to see with our own eyes what manner of men those might be, who were in the habit of devoting long hours to this voluntary hard labour, and, even if we felt a sad presentiment that a grandsire triple might prove too much for our feeble comprehension, a lingering hope remained that we might find the key to at least some part of the mystery if we could only, with our own eyes, see the thing done. It appeared, however, as if it were not to be. The opportunity persistently refused to offer itself, and we had almost given up hope when chance favoured us. A friend going to live in a town which contains one of the most enthusiastic devotees of the order, and where the bells are continually ringing, became an ancient youth —in self-defence, we opine—and the time had come. A very dark and cold evening in January found us crossing London-bridge, bellward bound.

The head-quarters of change ringing are in a long, rather low room on the first floor of the King's Head in Winchester-street, in the borough of Southwark. Records of distinguished peals, in frames of all sizes and various ages, adorn the walls, and an iron safe is fixed in a corner. Here the business of the venerable society is transacted, here its records and property are kept, and here is presently to be held a meeting at which it will be our high privilege to assist. A large, thickly bound book with strong brazen clasps, and a general appearance of having been made to stand constant reference for many years, lies on the table. This is the second volume of the peal-book, and was presented to the society by an enthusiastic amateur. Here are entered all the peals rung by the members, in records written by professional hands, in a most ornate style and in various bright colours. There are comparatively few entries in the book as yet, for it has been but recently commenced. By the time we have turned over its pages, a sufficient muster of college youths has come together, and an adjournment is made to the church.

The portion of the church we have to pass through, is dim enough by what little light comes from the organ loft, where the organist is practising. The lantern we have with us, is rather more useful, however, when we reach the narrow winding staircase leading to the belfry, which is dark indeed, and very long and very steep. When we reach the first halting-place, we feel but weak about the knees and giddy about the head, and are glad to cross along the level flooring of the loft.

"We nearly had an accident here the other day. Some of the boys were on in front, and were going to cross in the dark. Fortunately I called to them to wait until I brought the lantern, thinking it just possible some of the traps were open. Sure enough they were, and somebody must have gone right down to the floor of the church if I hadn't sung out in time." Thus our conductor, to the derangement of our nervous system, for the floor appears to be all trap, and the fastenings may or may not, be all secure.

Another spell of steep winding staircase, and we emerge breathless in the ringers' room.

Large and lofty is the ringers' room, lighted by a gas apparatus rather like the hoop that serves for a chandelier in a travelling circus. The walls are adorned by large black and gold frames, looking at first sight like monumental tablets to the memory of departed ringers, but proving on further examination to refer, like the records in the club-room, but on a larger

scale, to the performances of the society. Peals of all kinds appear to have been rung on these bells; but on one occasion it seems that "the company achieved a true peal of Kent treble Bob Maximus." Bob Major we have heard of, but Bob Maximus! Will they introduce us to Bob Maximus to-night?

The ropes of the twelve bells pass through holes in the ceiling and reach the floor. Under each is a little raised platform for the ringer to stand on, with a strap for his foot to help him in getting good purchase, and each rope half way up is covered for some four feet by a fluffy, woolly-looking covering, technically called a "sally," and intended to afford a good hold to the ringer as he checks his bell in the pull down. The case of the church clock fills up one side of the room, and from it unearthly clickings and wheezings presently come as the clock strives in vain to strike. To strike a vibrating bell suddenly from a fresh quarter is to crack it, so when the bells are rung their connexion with the clock has to be temporarily severed.

Coats are taken off, sleeves are turned up, and business is evidently about to begin. But nothing connected, however remotely, with music can be done without a quantity of tuning or other preliminary performances, and change ringing is no exception to this rule. Before the ringing can begin it is necessary to "set" the bells: to set a bell is to get it on the right balance, mouth upward. Some of the bells are set already, some consent to be set with little trouble; but the tenor, a small plaything of fifty-two hundredweight, or thereabouts, is obstinate to-night. Three youths take him in hand, and presently his deep note booms out sonorously, but he absolutely declines to assume the required position. We take the opportunity and go up, preceded by our friend with the lantern, into the belfry, and among the bells.

As we go, the tenor's voice becomes louder and louder, and the ladder and walls shake more and more, until at last, as we are going to step on to the platform of the bells, we shrink back as from a blow, from the stunning clash of sound with which he greets us. He is rather an alarming object to behold, swinging violently to and fro close to us, and we decline the invitation to step past him on to the staging beyond, for which feat there seems to us but scant space. Our conductor does not disturb himself in the least, but is presently busy among the bells, with his lantern, tightening a rope here, looking after a wheel there, sublimely indifferent to the clanging monster so close to him. And now, as we watch the bell swinging, we become painfully sensible that two of our favourite bell stories must be abandoned, if this be the customary method of ringing church bells; which, on inquiry, we find it is. There was a melodrama of thrilling interest once played—at the Victoria was it?—in the last act of which the hero was to be shot, or executed in some way, and the signal was to be given by the tolling of a bell. The heroine, bethinking herself that, if the execution were delayed for some time, her lover would be saved, ascended into the belfry, and, when the bell began to ring, herself swung by the clapper; by which ingenious gymnastic manœuvre she rendered the bell dumb. This might be all very well—although we had secret doubts about it—with a bell hanging mouth downwards and swinging only from side to side, but how about a bell the other way up, describing a circle, and sounding only when it again assumes an upright position, and the clapper falls? The story, albeit said to be founded on fact, must be given up, we fear. Quasimodo, again, however abnormal his activity, and however remarkable his familiarity with his bells, would find it difficult to ride this uncomfortable-looking tenor—Quasimodo would be dashed to pieces against the platform presently. All at once, alarming tenor comes up slowly, hovers, poises for a moment as though hesitating, and sets; his great mouth, five feet or so in diameter, turned at last the right way. All his companions have been in this position for some time, and now the ringing can begin. So, after feeling the thickness of tenor's sides and sounding him with our knuckles, we descend to the floor below, where we find ten ringers ready. A glance round from the conductor, who, with two assistants, rings the tenor, "go," and they start. The tower rocks, the bells clash, tenor booms at appointed intervals. After some little time, one gets used to the noise, which is not so great as might be expected, and begins to pick out the rhythm of the chime. The ringers all have an earnest, fixed expression; attention is written on every face. Occasionally a slight wandering look betokens that the ringer is a little vague as to his place in the change, but he soon seems to pick it up and come right again. The work is severe, especially on the arms and muscles of the back, but is done with an ease derived from long practice. The rope is pulled down at the sally, and falls in a loop to the floor; as it begins to fly up again, the ringer checks it, the bell is balanced against a wooden stay that prevents its falling over, and the clapper falls; then he lets it run up, round goes the wheel above, and with it the bell, and presently the bell's mouth comes up on the other side, and the clapper sounds again. It is a delicate operation, checking the bell on the poise; if done too late, the bell breaks away the restraining stay, the rope flies up, and probably disappears through the hole in the ceiling, drawn up round the revolving wheel, and disgrace is the portion of that youth. Disgrace and pecuniary penalty, for a fine is inflicted for a broken stay.

We are informed that a touch is being rung, and find on inquiry that anything short of a peal is called a touch. In a touch the changes are simply rung according to the recognised forms, and when the order of bells comes back to that of the first round, the touch stops. Comparatively few changes can be rung in this way, but there are many ways of introducing a fresh change, by which the ringers, instead of pursuing and completing the system in which they

began, take up some other combination of bells. The signal for such a change is given by the conductor, who calls "Bob!" or "Single!" upon which the desired change is made, and the touch lengthened. The conductor must necessarily have the whole science of change ringing at his fingers' ends, and must know exactly how to work his bells. Bobs or Singles in the wrong place would upset the whole arrangement, and the bells would get so clubbed that they would probably never get round to their proper order again; and as no good ringer ever thinks of leaving off until that state of things occurs, it is difficult to imagine what would happen. A peal consists of not less than five thousand changes, though many more can be rung, and the arranger of a given combination is said to have composed or invented it. He may, or may not, conduct and call the changes; if he do not, the conductor has to learn the peal, of course.

Until the time of one Fabian Stedman, who flourished as printer and bellringer at Cambridge about sixteen hundred and eighty, change ringing was in its infancy. Stedman greatly extended, and indeed revolutionised, the art, and his system, though far more complicated and intricate than the old method, is generally adopted by practised ringers. The old style is called the grandsire method, whether from its antiquity or no does not appear, and is tolerably simple. On eight bells, under either system, the ordinary changes are five thousand and forty, but Stedman arrives at this result by much the more tortuous path. Although it is easy enough to perceive that the peal is made by altering at stated and understood intervals the order in which the bells follow each other, and that these alterations are ruled by fixed laws, it is impossible to understand the scientific principles of change ringing without practical teaching and illustration—as impossible as it would be to attempt to explain in the same way the science of music. Enormous handbooks on the subject exist, it is true, but the endless rows of figures with which they are filled are, to the novice, bewildering in the extreme. Patient application and constant practice are the only means by which safe and steady change ringers are made. Besides the difficult task of learning to follow the windings of a peal, the technical terms are many and curious. We are told, in explanation of some of them, that doubles are rung on six bells, triples on eight, caters (or cators; there seems some doubt about the spelling) on ten, and cinques on twelve.

The touch comes to an end. Two of the ringers leave their ropes, and two novices take their places. Two older ringers stand behind them to prompt them and keep them straight; but the conductor, who this time has left the weighty tenor and taken a bell easier to handle, has his work cut out for him, and may be heard occasionally admonishing the neophytes in gruff tones.

Half a dozen boys have found their way up into the tower, and gaze at the performers with eager eyes; probably looking forward to the happy days when they, too, will be ringers. The audience has also gradually increased by the advent of stray collegians, until the room is now pretty full.

We find that change ringing is not without its dangers. We are told of a man who, the other day, in a country church, caught his foot in the loop made by the falling rope, and was presently taken up by it, and pitched across the room; we hear awful whispers of another victim, who was caught by the neck, and hung by his bell; but the date and place of this latter tragedy are not forthcoming. It is, however, a legend much in favour among frequenters of steeples, partly, perhaps, because of a wild statement with which it concludes, that "government" claimed, but without success, the manslaughtering bell. Excoriated hands are very common, and violent jerks and strains not unknown; but, on the whole, it seems safe enough.

The second touch being brought to a harmonious conclusion, the two smallest bells, hitherto idle, are brought into play, the treble sounding after the tenor, like a good-sized dinner-bell, and a third and last touch is rung with great spirit. Then, after we have received and modestly declined a polite invitation to try our hand at a bell, we file off down the corkscrew stairs, not without an uncomfortable feeling that, if we were to slip or stumble, an avalanche of college youths is behind, certain to be precipitated on to our prostrate body. Reaching the chapel again without damage, though with a good deal of dust and damp on our coats from the walls of the staircase, we find the organist still at work (we wonder how he likes the bells ringing overhead while he is practising), and passing over the stone that marks Massinger's last resting place, emerge into the churchyard. Thence, pursued by a triumphant burst of sound from the organ as if the organist were glad to get rid of us, we troop off to the meeting place of the society at the King's Head.

The first thing that strikes the visitor on opening the door, is that the ancient college youths are good and steady smokers. The smoke is so dense that for some time it is difficult to make out surrounding objects; the only way of avoiding inconvenience is to light up oneself, which, accordingly, every new comer does without loss of time.

On looking round the table and down the room, which is now quite full, it becomes evident that the bulk of the college youths present are of the working class. Our introducer is a Cambridge graduate and destined for the church, so it will be seen that the composition of the society is very catholic. It becomes soon pleasantly apparent that change ringing is by no means merely an excuse for beer. There is an excellent rule, strictly enforced, that no refreshments are allowed in the belfry; and moderation is clearly the custom in the club-room.

The iron safe is open, and the property and

archives of the company are displayed on the table, before the master, who fills the chair. We are shown a curious old silver bell, fixed on a silver mounted staff, which in old days were carried before the members of the society when they went on the 5th of November, as was their annual custom, to St. Mary-le-Bow to attend divine service. This is looked upon as the palladium of the society. The company also boast an old-fashioned two-handled silver cup, won in fair fight, as its inscription records: "This cup, the gift of Mr. Peter Bluck, of Sonning, in the county of Berks, was adjudged to the Society of College Youths for the superior stile"—the engraver's orthography at fault here—"in which they rang ten hundred and eight bob major in a contest with Oxford and Farnham Societies, at the above parish church, on Monday, August 4, 1783."

Among the archives are the name book, which contains the names of the members from the remotest time: the peal book, to which allusion has already been made, records their performances. The first entry in this book contains the names of the ringers, and the description of a peal rung at St. Bride's in January, 1724. Prior to that date these records were not kept with so much care as is now the case. The calligraphic achievements and decorations in the old book are not so brilliant as those in the new, but are always neat and in good taste.

Our obliging informant points out the most celebrated recorded peals for our admiration, and although we are by this time a little bewildered with caters, and bobs, and trebles, we are gratified to find that on the 27th April, 1861, the society rang a peal of cinques on Stedman's principle, at St. Michael's, Cornhill, which contained eight thousand five hundred and eighty changes, lasted six hours and forty-one minutes, and was the greatest number of changes ever rung in that intricate manner on twelve bells. It also pleases us to know that our friends accomplished in three hours and forty-two minutes, at St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, a peal of Stedman's caters (or cators) containing five thousand and eighty-one changes, and considered (although this looks a little egotistical on the part of the society) the finest performance on record.

If, however, this phrase seems to savour a little of patting oneself on the back, the ancient youths are justly entitled to be proud of their greatest achievement—an achievement so great that it has impelled them to have it recorded on an ornate glazed card, a distinction conferred on no other peal. By this decorative document it appears that on the 27th of April, 1868, a true peal of Kent treble-bob major, containing fifteen thousand eight hundred and forty changes, was rung at St. Matthews, Bethnal-green, in nine hours and twelve minutes. This was the longest peal ever rung by one set of men, and certainly seems a considerable feat.

The bells of St. Saviour's, Southwark, which we have just been ringing, are the heaviest peal in London, although the Bow Church tenor is heavier than our refractory friend. These appear to be the favourite bells in London; the heaviest peal of eight bells in England is in Exeter.

The flow of information is here interrupted by a suggestion that the society may like to hear a touch on the hand-bells, and this proposition being received with great favour, the hand-bells are produced and half a dozen college youths taking each two bells, and drawing their chairs into a circle away from the table, play up manfully. If it is difficult to remember and execute the part one bell has to take in a peal, it must be maddening to have charge of two bells. Of course the absence of the mechanical labour is in favour of the hand-bell ringer.

The precision of these ringers was marvellous. We could not have supposed it possible that such sweet sounds and such musical combinations could have been produced by a dozen hand-bells, and the members of the society present, experts be it remarked, appeared as pleased as the ignorant visitors. The ringers were all college youths of long experience and vast learning, but were nevertheless not insensible to the admiration and applause which greeted the termination of the touch.

The Society of College Youths was founded in 1637, by Lord Brereton and Sir Cliff Clifton, for the purpose of promoting the art of change ringing. It is said that the name is derived from the fact that the young gentlemen of the City were in the habit of chiming rounds on the bells of the College of St. Spirit and Mary, near College-hill, Thames-street, a foundation of Sir Richard Whittington's, and afterwards destroyed in the great fire. The society made good progress, and bears many noble and distinguished names on its early rolls; but its performances must have been of a tame and monotonous nature at first. The members began with simple rounds and changes, and it was not until about 1642 that any complicated changes were rung. Even then very little progress was made, until Stedman, the father of change ringing, appeared. The college youths visited Cambridge, where this Caxton of bells lived, and performed the first peal on his principles, at St. Benet's, in that town, and he, in return presumably, dedicated to the society his Campanologia, an elaborate treatise on bell ringing, published about this time. From this period the art made rapid progress, and intricate peals soon began to be recorded.

The society having outlived its first youth, now dubbed itself the Ancient Society of College Youths; and we find that in 1718 they, in conjunction with the London scholars, presented St. Bride's with two bells to complete the set of twelve. For about sixty years the head-quarters of the society were at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields; since 1849 they have been at St. Saviour's, Southwark.

The list of members is curious. Several lord mayors are to be found in it, including a

Slingsby Bethell in 1756, and in 1782 Sir Watkin Lewis, who was also member for the City. Admiral Geary, in 1725; John Hardham, the well-known tobacconist, of "Hardham's '37" snuff celebrity, and a famous ringer; Sir Watkin Wynne, Lord Dacre, and the Marquis of Salisbury, also figure in the list. The last two were joint founders with Lord Brereton and Sir Cliff Clifton. It is said that Sir Matthew Hale, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and the great Lord Burleigh—Elizabeth's lord high treasurer—as well as other grave and learned men were fond of change ringing and patrons of the art; but their names do not appear in the list of members.

The society, flourishing enough now, has had more than one interval of something very like extinction, although it is stoutly denied that it ever really came to an end. It must have been in a bad way, however, at one time; and the fact of the peal-book having disappeared, and not being found until some time afterwards, in a butcher's shop in Bristol, undoubtedly looks awkward.

There is another society of change ringers in London, called the Cumberland, and practising at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, which possibly sprang from the internal dissensions that at one time agitated the older society. The London scholars, who are frequently mentioned in the earlier records of the college youths, appear to have become extinct as a change-ringing society; and although there is an association of change ringers in almost every town where there is a good peal of bells, the Ancient Society of College Youths is the most important, as it is the most venerable in the kingdom. Its rules are few and simple, and its subscription and expenses low, and for this reason, no doubt, it has gradually attracted more and more members from the working class.

As the evening was pretty far advanced by the time we had possessed ourselves of these particulars, we bade farewell to the Ancient Society of College Youths without waiting for another touch on the hand-bells, and went our way, grateful for a courteous reception and a pleasant evening.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XVI.—*Continued.*

NOON NEXT DAY.—I see two letters which I did not notice last night. *Yes* I did. I shall not tell lies to myself, though I *am* sunk low enough. I did see *hers*, but I did not care to open it. I could guess the tune. *Here* it is now. O I blush as I look at the writing, and as I would, were Dora's own sweet eyes turned on me now. I saw that fellow here that is outlawed, and dare not show his face in England; but what is he to me, that have wasted the substance of those who are dear to me, and have brought ruin on them. Here is her letter. Those trembling fingers of mine may as well now go on with the farce of pasting it in:

"O my dearest, what will you think of me and my selfishness when I must again write to you and trouble your little holiday with more dismal news? O that I could suffer it all myself, but I know not whither to turn, save to that *one* friend, who knows what is good for us, and will assist us at the fitting time. Our little child has relapsed again, and again there is more expense, and, O my dearest, there is something else for you to bear! They tell us that the Bank is going to close its country offices and keep entirely in London—at least this is rumoured. So God knows what is to become of us all. Don't distress yourself about the rent, as I feel confident we shall find some way. I shall—I must. You know my little stock of trinkets, *the* gold chain dear mamma gave me, and which she made me promise I would never part with? Well, she would not mean me to be ruined and wretched for the sake of keeping *that* promise. Let us only keep up, and trust—something must come. Mr. Bernard was here, and to my joy tells me, he gave you more than double that would be sufficient for the journey. So stay, dearest, as long as it will last—though if you could squeeze us out a few pounds for the children,—but here is my selfishness. If you had seen our dear friend's face when I told him of your brave resolution—so splendidly kept—of the prayer that you so faithfully say. I did not show him any of the diary, you may be sure, simply, dearest, because you have given up sending it to me, a punishment I own I deserve richly. But I will coax you to show it to me all when you return, and there is a little scheme I can tell you, on foot, by which a little money might be turned, on what they call "the half profit system"—so our librarian was telling me—a little of the expense of publishing to be met at first by the author, but he *shares all the clear profits* after."

Wretch—villain! Again I say, what *is* to become of me? The other letter from Mr. Bernard. His orders, indeed! I wish I had never seen his face; it was he who sent me on this cursed journey. What words I begin to use! Yet I mean it in a proper sense. Why didn't he let me die at home?

"I wish you to go at once back to Frankfort. You seem to have quite misapprehended me, and I think it was indiscreet of you to have left such a sum at a strange

bank, instead of getting a letter of credit on a London one. I wish, too, that you had adhered to the letter of my instructions, as the merchant reasonably complains of my raising the price I proposed. You will please to return him the difference at once, and I will give you a useful little business hint, which may be valuable. That insignificant rise in price which you squeezed out of him, may cost me the loss of thousands. Do you not see? And above all, I conjure you be most cautious about the gambling: I say this *most seriously*—for the moment I read the fine speeches and sentiments, in some diary or letter of yours, I will own to you I began to have misgivings. Get the letter of credit *at once*, and send it to me by this night's post."

Now this is falling low indeed! So he suspects me; he does not trust me. How dare he be so insolent, because he assisted me with his few pounds? Restore my health indeed! He has destroyed it—ruined me for ever—*I feel my heart and nerves worn away*—weary and inflamed to a degree I shall never get over. A sword seems to have entered into me. O that I had never come here, and had sunk down, out of this vile world—as I was then. I must go into Frankfort, and take my load with me.

I just meet Grainger, who looks at me curiously, and with an air of insolent inquiry as it seems to me.

"Down in the mouth," he says: "I told you there was no beating the bank. Heavily hit, I see."

My humiliation and despair could not let me stand this, and I said, passing on,

"Nothing of the kind."

"Are you serious? What! Been winning on the system, eh?"

"Neither one nor the other," I said, angrily. "I am not well, and do not want to be catechised."

"My good friend," he said, "it is only the regular epidemic of the place. The losing sickness. Bless you, why keep up subterfuges with me? Surely I know it all. A croupier told me. You lost every halfpenny last night. You haven't anything to bring you back, you know you haven't."

Here was humiliation.

"Now don't," he said; "don't vent it on me; but let us see what is to be done. As for a pauper like me lending you the money——"

"Indeed, I should scorn to ask it——"

"It would be no use, I am telling you. So I tell you fairly. But I tell you what, I give you this valuable bit of advice. Leave by to-night's train, or by the four train, which is the earliest."

"I want no advice," I said; "and pray, if I have lost everything, how am I to go? O God help me, Grainger, what am I saying or doing? I am wretched—ruined—and death is the only thing to think of."

He looked at me steadily a moment.

"I once was precisely in that way, but no one pitied me, and I got over it, and saw what a ridiculous thing it would be to be talking of death. But, my good friend, you must do something. The banker will advance you the money on the strength of your connexion with Mr. Bernard."

"That would be robbery and gambling too; I have no right to borrow what I could not pay."

"Well, then I tell you seriously, there is only one other course; you will scout it, but it is the only rational one. You must get back some of your money."

"Get it back from *them!* Why they have no hearts—no pity."

"You talk like a child—I mean by play."

I recoiled.

"Go near that cursed board again? no, never! never! I shall die first."

"Die for sixty or seventy pounds! I tell you I am serious. Take five naps; you have lost so much, it will add five more to the lost. Those five may *bring you thirty*—I don't think more—but I tell you solemnly, it is the only chance, and it has happened again and again. I know it is a desperate chance; but you had better think of it."

He has left me, and I am thinking of it, and shall think of it as I am in the train. O, but there is but one devouring feeling at my heart, to fly at once—this moment—from this place. The very name "kursaal" makes my pulse go. The very look of their red palace is as the sight of a drop to a murderer.

Seven o'clock.—Returned from Frankfort. Alone in the carriage all the way—alone with a lump of lead laid on my heart, which yet went heaving and heaving wearily—alone with my hot damp wrists and galloping pulse. That imprisonment in a railway carriage, with a misery at your heart, is the greatest of agonies. I would have given worlds to get free, walk about, *leave myself behind*, but I seemed to be bound down by steel bands. It was hours long—no hope before me! How shall I tell her—

how shall I meet *her*, my lost ruined Dora. Returning home quite restored in health, to work for my family! Why I return with a knife in my heart! I look at that ridiculous "avis" to the travellers, stuck up there in three languages, and it is as dim and confused as the figures in a ledger the day before I set out. God Almighty look down on me in this agony—have mercy and pity on me!

I saw the merchant; he was very stiff, and asked what did I want—was not the transaction concluded? I explained that I had exceeded my instructions, and would return him the money he had paid in excess.

"That comes a little late," he said; "your principal has heard, I see, of my transferring my commissions to another house."

I became very earnest and almost passionate about the matter, assuring him it was my fault, that I was in ill-health, and was suffering, and had a great deal on my mind, and hoped he would not injure me in *this* way.

He looked at me hard, and taking me by the arm, turned me suddenly to the light, "Ah! I see—the colour has lost!"

My eyes fell on the ground.

"You are hardly the agent," he went on, "I would have chosen. You want resolution. No matter. I won't add to your troubles. So I will take back the money. I'll write a receipt now."

"I shall go and fetch it," I said.

"What, not brought it?" he said, laying down his pen.

"I shall be back in half an hour," I said.

"Then I can't wait longer," he replied.

I went out hurriedly, but the demons that had pursued me from the tables were waiting in the street and joined me. It was they, I know, who made me lose my way almost at once, which I could have sworn I had by heart. I asked it, and seemed to get more and more astray. Suddenly at a corner I came upon Grainger, smoking. For a second I felt glad.

"Why," he said, "you here? Ah! I see, you have taken my advice—come for more money, like myself."

"Nothing of the kind," I said, shortly. "I have come in on business."

"Money is the only business. Are you going to the train?"

"No," I said, rudely. "I am on some private affairs of my own."

"O, I see," he said, smiling; "a hint to mind my own business. Losers are always privileged. Still I will do you a good turn. If you are looking for the bank, it is merely round the corner—that yellow building."

He was so good-humoured that I took his hand, and said: "O, Grainger, have indulgence; I am in a wretched, miserable way."

"So I see," he said; "and in an absurd way too. Now, see. You go off and arrange your affairs, whatever they may be. I shall wait for you at the Place here. You are a cup too low to begin with."

I went into the bank—it was just closing—and drew out the money. I remembered Mr. B.'s express wish, and asked for an order on London, less, of course, the sum I was to return to the merchant. The clerks were not very civil, and there was a crowd, owing to some fair that was going on. Then, when they did attend to me, they told me it was too late, that their letters were sealed up, and I could have no order that day. I was irritable, and, indeed, the thought before my mind was the weary journey on the railway, in company with the weight on my heart; and I said, I would take the money and try at another bank, where I would find more civility. The thousand franc notes were tossed over to me, and I came away. I buttoned them up carefully in my pocket, and as I looked at them, trembled.

I found Grainger, not at the Place, but outside.

"Now," he said, "you are my prisoner. I have ready cash; and before you take a step you must turn into this restaurant, and have a half bottle of real German wine. I want it myself desperately. Why, man, you are in a fever. It is all weakness and nervousness, and this will put heart, I hope, into you."

I was indeed weak, and I own I thought with pleasure of something that would raise my sinking, sinking heart, which used periodically *to leap downwards*, as it were, and make me think I was going to die. I felt that there is a stage when you are in a deep and desperate trouble, when all you ask for is a little respite, a little repose; though the trial itself—too awful to think of—is as fixed as fate, and must be accepted. I was glad to have him, and we went in. It was a burning hot day. To "have something on your mind," on a bright, sunny, oppressive day, in a great, strange, white town, makes everything yet more dismal. The wine was very good, and did put some heart into me. In truth,

I have been too low, and have eaten scarcely at all these few days. We came out, and then I went straight back to the merchant. He was a punctual man, and had gone away precisely as the clock had struck, at the end of the half hour he had given me. Where had he gone? To his villa in the country; his carriage had been waiting ready at the door. No. There was no one left to take a message, or receive anything.

Everything was going wrong—taking a crooked turn. But what did a trifle like this signify? In the carriage Grainger began at me.

"You are in a strange way, and if you don't take care, my friend, you will go off and die. I know you will say what matter; but think of leaving *her* to fight the battle, to face the debts and duns, the results of your folly, as I must call it. It would be highly selfish, would it not? You safe and out of the confusion, gone to reap the reward of your piety and good works in a glorious kingdom, while that poor angel of a Dora was left to suffer."

He might say what he liked, in what cold sneering way he pleased. It was all one to me. What he said was reasonable though.

"I come back," he went on, "to what I said this morning. You must do something—you must make an exertion, however disagreeable, and, as I said, try and *get back some*. Think of all the long hours of agony before you—nights, days, weeks, months. What is to become of you? Perhaps this very night you might reverse everything, and leave that room happy. I don't say *do* this, but think of it."

Nine o'clock.—God Almighty in his infinite goodness be praised. I come in with a heart something lighter. Grainger, you are my saviour. There they are—fifteen golden napoleons torn from the clutches of these villains. He was right—it was a duty to make some exertion, and though I felt a shudder as we drew near the fatal rooms, still I was not now to spare myself, or indulge my delicacies. I went so far as to accept his loan. After all, what was I going to do? This was a different state of things from the original one. Was I not going to get my *own* money from robbers? That nerved me; and shall I own it? I said a heartfelt prayer to Heaven, as I took the first piece of money in my fingers. Grainger was good and generous, after all.

"I have done you wrong," I said, "but I have tried hard to repair it. You have a noble nature and a forgiving one."

"Don't be too sure of that," he said; "spare compliments until the play is over. But how curious you should be borrowing money of *me*, and *that* money what you called, I think, the wages of sin!"

We were in the room, and I did not mind much what he was saying. I shrank back as I heard the accursed burr of the robbing wheel.

"I *can't* go in. My heart droops and sinks."

I saw black demons coming up and offering to take my hand. I covered my face and rushed out on the terrace, where the innocent and *virtuous* were taking coffee.

"Are you mad, or a fool?" Grainger said to me. "What exhibition are you going to make?"

"I can't face it," I said; "it will kill me."

"Then give me my money back," he said, roughly; "I suppose you don't mean to rob *me*, too?"

I did not heed the malignant look he gave me: for the word, *rob*, unconsciously persuaded.

"Come in, come in," I said, hurriedly.

"No fear of being late," he said; "they'll wait for us."

My wretched heart seemed to thump as I laid down my first piece, and yet I was indifferent. I doubt if I would have even gasped had it been swept off. The man broken on the wheel feels little after the first strokes. But with that came fortune back. I do believe it was the blessing I had invoked, or perhaps the prayers of my pet at home, to whom, if things brighten, and we live over all this, and the clouds *may* break one of these days, I shall show these pages—this strange analysis of a soul—at a time when distance has made all less painful to look back to.

When I showed Grainger what I had got, he was ill-natured and sneering. That is his way. People are welcome to sneer at me now.

"A wonderful winning," he said, "but put it beside what you have lost. It won't help you much, my friend, when you offer it as a composition to the bank. I should like to be present on the occasion."

"Take your money at any rate," I said, bitterly; "you are behaving very strangely to me."

"You will only be asking me again," he said, smiling, "and that would be humilia-

ting. This gambling makes us eat all kinds of dirt; and I give you my honour, if I was to insult you in the most degrading way, we would have you returning when you had lost the last coin, with a 'Grainger, do let me have that money I returned to you to-day.' No, my poor man, I wouldn't like to see you so low as *that*. So just keep it, at least for a few hours."

That happy hour may come; for surely there are not special victims selected whom the world shall persecute from beginning to the end. Now, to go to bed, and get some soft sleep, which I sigh for, and yet—it is too early. After all, there is nothing so much to elevate me, a few wretched louis got back out of the vast total all melted away. The luck may turn to-morrow. But it is really like being elated at surmounting a small hill, with the Alps, and Mont Blanc itself, rising beyond. Ah! I should have stayed on, as Grainger said, and *backed my luck*. If we do not back our luck, it will not back us. I am getting restless, and shall go out for a stroll in the cool air.

What was I to do? Yes, what *was* I to do? I could not live on, under this horrible, restless, undecided condition of existence. If I could but tear myself from the fatal edge of the precipice—but what would be before me then? Return to disgrace and certain ruin—strange to say, there was one thing I shrank from, the terrible suspense, the journey between—the flutter and impatience of *that* would be worse than death, worse than what was to come in the end. At the bottom of the gardens and outside the terrace—those gardens which are kept up by these infernal decorators, and in which some of my lost gold will furnish wages for gardeners and flowers—I say, at the bottom of this devilish pasture runs the road, and on the other side of that, larger more retired walks and grounds, with the great view of the hills and the broad open country, opening out fresh and innocent, as if *they* did not, with the air, benefit by man's crimes and villanies. But this hypocrisy would not pass upon me, and I knew that the vile, devilishly got gambler's money had cleared away the trees, had planted others, and had cut artfully winding walks up the sides of the hills. Nature indeed! Was not that the last touch of satanic craft?

There was here a sort of retirement; oh! would to Heaven it had been utter loneliness and desolation, cut off from the gangs of smooth and idle chatterers, who come smirking by, and in their mean cowardly way get vile and sinful benefits out of what their pitiful hearts have not courage, or are ashamed of their fellow Grundys, to face or touch. What a miserably contemptible crew! So sneaking and cowardly! Mrs. This, Mr. That, so genteelly good, and yet when judgment comes to be nicely determined, more responsible for this mean compounding, than poor struggling wretches who make no pretence, but who would do right had they strength. Surely they and the *band of swindlers*, who hold this place, are the guilty ones. Never fear, never fear, they will be reckoned with in good time and to the last farthing—I pledge my poor tortured soul for that. Their gathering up of skirts and complacent interchange of suitable reprobation over the tumbler, and on the steps of the wells, with officially pious lords, aye, and even bishops and clergymen, shall not save them. Health, indeed! Ordered the waters! Must come! I thought the good and the officially pious were to sacrifice health, strength, wealth, life itself, in the holy cause of principle, but that is their concern, as they will find out one of these fine morning, or perhaps when the dark, never-ending night is closing in about them. Now they will go back to their country-houses, town-houses, and at some dinner party tell what they think dramatic things, about so many notes down, so many heaps of gold "raked in by the croupier," and then, to a chorus of "Really now;" "How dreadful!" or "*How* exciting!" return to sip their champagne or sherry, quite pleased with their own powers of touching off a picture.

What do they care, if some agonised wrench of the heart followed that "raking in" of the croupier? What do they care, if with that heap of notes rustled away hope and happiness? From those satanic fingers came in return the hellish present of ruin, disgrace, remorse, something that would drag down home and house, and maybe death itself. That would be only too much of a blessing.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read at Edinburgh, February 24; Glasgow, February 25; Edinburgh, February 26; St. James's Hall, London, March 2; Wolverhampton, March 4; Manchester, March 6 and 8; Hull, March 10; York, March 11; Hull, March 12.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II. CHAPTER IV.

He loves me; he loves me not.

THE interest which Walter Joyce had awakened in Lady Caroline Mansergh on the night of the dinner party, by no means died out, or even waned. Flirtation is certainly not an exceptional amusement in the dead level of dreary occupations which a country-house life affords, but this word-pastime was certainly not flirtation. The notion of flirting with her brother's secretary, which would have been exceedingly comic to the rest of the world, and afforded a vast deal of amusement to the kindly noodle portion of the Westhope society, did not strike Lady Caroline at all in a ridiculous light; but to flirt with Walter Joyce she knew would be impossible. The sighing and looking, the giving and taking, the fetching and carrying, and all the poodle tricks which are played by the best style of male flirts, in the best style of society, she knew would be impossible to him; and though she had had long practice in the art, and had derived no little amusement from it, she felt it would be repulsive to her to try her hand on such a subject. If not a desire for flirtation, what was it that irresistibly impelled her to seek this man's society; that made her start and thrill at the unexpected sound of his voice; that enabled her to picture to herself so vividly certain expressions in his eyes, gestures of his hands, to recal phrases of his conversation? Was it real passion? Had love come to her at last? Was this the man with whom her fate was to be for ever bound up? Lady Caroline half smiled as she contemplated this tremendous possibility. It was too wild, too romantic, this story of the Lord of Burleigh, with the sexes reversed, and with herself for heroine; the man was different from those with whom her life had been passed, had brains and courage to use them, did not think the society thoughts nor speak the society language, and was not conformable in any way to the society pattern. That was what it meant. That was the source of the strange interest she felt in him—interest which was friendly and appreciative, but nothing further.

Nothing further. That was why she had manœuvred, carefully, skilfully, and with perfect feminine tact, never ceasing until the object was accomplished, that it was understood that Mr. Joyce joined the family circle always after dinner, whether there were visitors or not; that was why she invariably found opportunities to have him seated by her side, or standing by her, turning over the pages of her music, while Lord Hetherington, with a dexterity only acquired by long practice, held up the newspaper before him, being at the time sound asleep, and her ladyship, scorning concealment, slumbered placidly in the garish light of the moderator lamp. Nothing further. That was why Lady Caroline had suddenly taken to pedestrian exercise, wanted an escort occasionally to the village, and hated the idea of being followed about in the country by a footman; found she had quite forgotten that charming Shakespeare, and determined to read his dear plays again, and would not trouble Mr. Joyce to send those heavy big volumes from the library, but would come in and read them there occasionally, if he was quite sure she did not disturb him. The jealous tortures endured by the valiant

Othello, which Lady Caroline selected for her first Shakespearian reading, apparently did not interest her very much. The great family history of the Wests, derived from ancient chronicles and documents, upon which Lord Hetherington's secretary was engaged, made but little progress on the occasions of her ladyship's visits. There were the longest and the pleasantest talks. In Caroline Mansergh's hands Joyce was as pliable as potter's clay. In less than a week after the dinner party he had told her the history of his life, made her acquainted with his hopes and fears, his wishes and aspirations. Of course she heard about his engagement to Marian, equally of course that was the part of the story in which she felt, and showed, the greatest interest. Very quickly she knew it all. Under her skilful questioning, Joyce not merely told her what had actually occurred, but opened to her the secret chambers of his heart, and displayed to her penetrating sense feelings, with the existence of which he himself was scarcely acquainted. The odd, uncomfortable sensation which first came over him in his last walk with Marian round the school garden, when she spoke of how it might have been better if they had never met, and how poorly armed he was for the great conflict of life; the renewal of the sting with its bitterness increased fifty-fold at the receipt of her letter dilating on the luxury of Woolgreaves, and her dread of the poverty which they would have to encounter; the last hint given to him in the worldly advice contained in Jack Byrne's letter—all these were submitted to Lady Caroline's keen powers of dissection, without Walter's being in the least aware how much of his inner life he had made patent to her. A look, a nod, a word here or there, begat, increased, and developed his assurance of sympathy; and he could have talked till all eternity on the subject dearest to his heart. Lady Caroline let him talk, and only starred the dialogue with occasional interjections, always of a sympathising character. When she was alone, she would sit for hours reviewing the conversation just past in the minutest detail, weighing and re-weighing sentences and even words which Joyce had spoken, sifting, balancing, ascribing to such and such influences, putting aside such and such theories, bringing all her feminine wits—and in the great points of feminine cleverness, an odd common sense, and an undefinable blundering on to the right, she had no superior—to the solution of the question of Walter Joyce's future so far as Marian Ashurst was concerned. Whatever conclusion she may have arrived at she kept to herself; no one ever had the slightest glimmering of it. Her talks with Walter Joyce were as numerous as ever, her interest in his career no less, her delight in his society by no means impaired; but the name of Miss Ashurst never passed Lady Caroline's lips, and whenever she saw the conversation necessarily veering that way, she invariably struck it out into some new channel. Not that Lady Caroline Mansergh had any jealousy of this "simple maiden in her flower;" she would not have allowed that for an instant, would not have allowed, in her most secret communings with herself, that such a thing could be possible; for she had been properly and rigidly brought up in the Belgravian code of morals, though a little inclined to kick against them now, and think for herself; and the Belgravian code of morals holds the cultivation of the bienséances as the most essential portion of a young lady's curriculum, and the bienséances effectively ignore the existence of any such low sentiment as jealousy in the minds of perfectly constituted members of the upper classes. Not that Walter Joyce would have noticed the display of any such passion as jealousy, or, as Lady Caroline thought rather ruefully, could allow any such feeling to be excited in him. In all her experience—and it had been large—she had never come across a man so completely——Well, she could scarcely find a term for it. It was not apathetic, because he was bright, and intelligent, and earnest. Perhaps confiding was the best word to use, so far as his relations with Marian were concerned, though, as Lady Caroline felt, those relations were a little dashed with recent doubt; and as for his feelings with regard to herself, skilled mistress as she was in the art of such wordy warfare, Lady Caroline could never trap him into an ambuscade, or force him into anything like an acknowledgment of a liking for her. It was not for the want of trying to evoke it, not for lack of given opportunity on her part, that this avowal never was made. Fortune favoured her, notably on one occasion; and if Walter Joyce had ever contemplated anything beyond a feeling of pleasant friendship for Lady Caroline Mansergh, he would have availed himself of that occasion for expressing it. Thus it came about. Lady Caroline was sitting half buried in a big soft easy chair before

the library fire, presumably enjoying Othello, but really watching her brother's secretary, who was busily transcribing from a big black-letter volume before him some of the glorious deeds of her remote ancestry. Raising his eyes after one of his pen-dips, Joyce met Lady Caroline's glance fixed straight upon him, and said:

"Thinking of Iago's subtlety, Lady Caroline, or Desdemona's innate weakness? The former, I should say, judging from your expression."

"My expression must be very poor, then, Mr. Joyce, or your powers of reading expression must be extremely limited. I was thinking of something totally different."

"May one ask of what?" He had had a long day at the chronicles of the West family, and a little relief was absolutely necessary.

"Oh dear yes, my thoughts were certainly not to be marked 'confidential' or even 'private.' I was thinking about our going back to town."

"Oh indeed! Is that imminent?"

"I should say certainly. Parliament meets within a fortnight, and West, I mean Lord Hetherington, never misses that. Lady Hetherington won't let him go alone, and once in Beaufort-square, I suppose they'll stop on."

"I suppose so. This house will seem wonderfully different when you have all left it."

"Naturally. Deserted houses must be different to those filled with company, though their actual appearance is of course only known to the housekeeper who is left in them, and housekeepers seldom give their impressions to the world."

"If you are interested in the subject, perhaps you will permit me to give you a faithful photograph of Westhope in its dismantled state."

"Evolved from your inner consciousness, like the German's idea of the camel?"

"On the contrary, drawn in the minutest detail from personal observation. The exact position of the pen which Lord Hetherington threw down after signing his last cheque for Mr. Deacon, the steward, the state of the withering hothouse flowers left by her ladyship on her table in the drawing-room, the vacant chair in the library once filled by——"

"Thanks, that's enough! I won't trouble you to be poetical, Mr. Joyce, that will be wanted one day at Helmingham, I suppose, and it's never wise to be extravagant with one's ideas. But you don't mean to say you think you will be left behind here, at Westhope, when the family returns to town?"

"Assuredly, Lady Caroline! How else should I be able to make any progress with my work?"

"I think you will find," said Lady Caroline, with a smile, "that the history of our family, wonderfully interesting as it doubtless is, and anxiously expected by the literary world, as it necessarily must be, will have to remain in abeyance for a little time. The fact is, that Lord Hetherington has been recently much struck with the levelling and democratic spirit of the age, and has determined, so far as he is able, to stem the torrent. He will need a certain amount of assistance before bringing the matter before the House of Lords, and for that assistance I know he looks to you!"

He was a trying man, this Mr. Joyce. There was a scarcely suppressed gleam of fun in Lady Caroline's usually earnest eyes, that ought to have conveyed to any man acquainted with the circumstances of the position, the fact that this new combination had been suggested by her, and by her alone, and that she perfectly appreciated not merely its serviceable but its ludicrous side. Walter Joyce appreciated neither. He should of course be ready to give his services in whatever way they might be required, he said; adding, with clumsy candour, that he had been almost looking forward to the time of the family's departure, for the additional facilities which would be afforded him in getting on with his work.

This was too much for Lady Caroline. A flush passed across her cheek, as she said: "It has been Lady Hetherington's accidental, and by no means wilful error, Mr. Joyce, that your time has been already so much intruded on! We have, unfortunately for us no doubt, been unaccustomed to the ways of recluses, and have preposterously imagined that a little society might be more agreeable to them than——" But here she stopped, catching sight of the troubled expression on his face, of his downcast eyes and twitching lips. There was silence for a moment, but he soon mastered his emotion.

"I see plainly that I have blundered, as was not unnatural that I should, through the lack of power of expressing myself clearly. Believe me, Lady Caroline, that I am infinitely indebted to Lord and Lady Hetherington, and to you especially. Yes,

indeed, for I know where the indebtedness lies — more especially to you for all the kindness you have shown me, and the notice you have taken of me. And I—I intended——"

"Will you prove the truth of your protestations by never saying another word on the subject? The give-and-take principle has been carried out in our society as much as the most ardent democrat, say yourself, Mr. Joyce, could have desired. I am sure you are too good-natured to mourn over the hours torn from your great work, and frittered away in frivolous conversation, when you know that you have helped Lady Hetherington and myself to undergo an appalling amount of country people; and that while the dead Wests may grieve over the delay in the publication of their valour and virtue, the living Wests are grateful for assistance rendered them in their conflict with the bores. However, all that is nearly at an end. When the family is at Hetherington House, I have no doubt you will be enabled to enjoy the strictest seclusion. Meantime, there is only one festivity that I know of, which is likely to cause us to ask you to tear yourself away from your chronicles."

"And that is——?"

"A skating party. Consequently dependent on the state of the weather. So that if you are still hermit-ically inclined, you had better pray for a thaw. If the frost holds like this, we are anticipating a very pleasant afternoon to-morrow, the people from the barracks and some others are coming over, the men report the ice in capital order, and there's to be luncheon and that kind of thing. But perhaps, after all, you don't skate, Mr. Joyce?"

"Oh yes, indeed—and you?"

"Nothing in the world I'm so fond of, or, if I may say so, that I do so well. We wintered one year in Vienna, there was a piece of water privately enclosed called the Schwann Spiegel, where the Emperor—never mind!"

The next day was very bright and very pleasant. Whether Walter Joyce had prayed for a thaw or not, it is certain that the frost of the previous night had been very mild as compared with its immediate predecessors; the wind had shifted round to the south-west, the sun had actual warmth, and weatherwise people assumed to notice a certain dun effect of the atmosphere, and therefrom to presage snow. The notion of the skating party about to take place had been received with immense delight at the barracks at Brocksopp, and at the various houses to which invitations had been forwarded. To exhibit themselves in becoming costume a little removed from ordinary everyday dress, was in itself a delight to the younger members of society, while the elders, independently of their gratification in being brought personally into contact with the Lord-Lieutenant of the county, knew the capabilities of the Westhope cellar and kitchen, and recognised the fact that luncheon under such auspices meant something more than sandwiches and cheap sherry. The gathering was held on a large sheet of water, which was a pond, but which, being situate in the Westhope domain, profited by the generally aristocratic nature of its surroundings and was called a lake, lying about half a mile from the house. A large tent had been pitched on the bank, and as of course it was impossible to have any regular sit-down luncheon, refreshments were perpetually going on, "snacks" were indulged in between the performance of wild evolutions given out to be quadrilles, and gone through to the music of the military band, which, with very blue cheeks and very stiff fingers, was playing on the bank, and the consumption of liquids, from champagne in tumblers to curaçoa in wine glasses, was tremendous.

The party from Westhope had driven down in a break, in which a seat had been offered to Walter Joyce by Lady Hetherington herself, who had condescended to visit the library for the express purpose. It happened, however, that the secretary was specially engaged on an important letter, which it was necessary should be despatched that day, so that he was compelled to ask to be allowed to find his own way to the lake. When he arrived, there was already a large gathering, the bank was lined with spectators, and there was a tolerably large number of skaters. Lord Hetherington, wrapped in an enormous fur coat, with a hood hanging half-way down his back, was standing looking on with a somewhat melancholy expression. It had just occurred to him that skating was a pleasant pastime, that to skate well was a thing of which a man might reasonably be proud; at the same time he realised the fact that it was a thing impossible to be done by proxy—he could not get any man to skate for him and give him the credit of it. Colonel Tapp, cleaner shaved and waxier moustached than ever, stood by his lordship. The colonel did not skate, not that he could not; in his youth he had

been a proficient in the art, but he was not in his youth now, and was so strapped, and busked, and laced into his various garments, outer and inner, that he feared if by mischance he fell it might either be impossible for him to get up at all, or something might give way and cause him to be raised in a limp and unpresentable condition. Mr. Biscoe had no such qualms, and was buckling on his skates with all his characteristic impetuosity — old-fashioned skates, cumbrous with woodwork, and with curly tops, very different from the light and elegant trifles in which handsome little Mr. Boyd was performing all sorts of figures before the countess and a group of ladies gathered together on the bank, and trying to look as if they were interested and amused.

"Charmin' scene!" said Lord Hetherington, surveying the lake in a birdlike fashion, with his head on one side—"charmin', quite! Whenever I see ice and that kind of thing, always reminds me of some humorous adventures I once read in a book, 'bout man on the ice, Pickwinkle, or some such name. 'Commonly humorous book, to be sure!" and his lordship laughed very heartily at his reminiscences.

"You mean Pickwick, my lord!" said the colonel. "Ah! I hope what happened to him won't happen to any of our party, specially our fair friends who are pirouetting away there so prettily. If you recollect the ice broke and Mr. Pickwick got a ducking. How's the ice, Boyd?" to the boy, who came spinning to the edge at the moment.

"First class, colonel, couldn't be in better form, it's as hard as nails and as slippery as—as old boots," said Mr. Boyd, after hesitating an instant for an appropriate simile.

"Ah! but just keep up at this end, will you?" said Mr. Biscoe, looking up, his face purple with the exertion of pulling at a refractory strap. "I was past here yesterday morning and saw that at the other end the men had broken up the ice for the deer or the waterfowl, and consequently what's there is only last night's frost, binding together the floating bits of yesterday, and likely to be very rotten!"

"Better have a board with 'Dangerous' or somethin' of that sort written on it and stuck up, hadn't we?" suggested Lord Hetherington, with Serpentine reminiscences.

"Scarcely time to get one prepared, my lord!" replied Mr. Biscoe, with a slight smile. "Here, two of you men take a rope and lay it across the ice just below that alder tree. That'll warn 'em, and you, Boyd, tell 'em all to keep above that line. No good having any bother if one can prevent it." And Mr. Biscoe hobbled down the bank and shot away across the lake, returning in an instant, and showing that if his skates were old-fashioned, he could keep pace with any of the young ones notwithstanding.

"Nice exercise—very!" said the colonel, who was getting so cold that he was almost prepared to risk the chance of a tumble and "have a pair on." "I do like to see a woman skating; there's something in it that's——Ah!" And the old colonel kissed the tips of his fingers, partly to warm them, partly to express his admiration. "Now, who is that in the brown velvet trimmed with fur? She seems to know all about it."

"That's my sister Caroline," said his lordship, looking through his double glass. "Yes, she skates capitally, don't she? Pretty dress, too; looks like those people in the pictures outside the polkas, don't it? Who's——Oh, Mr. Joyce! How d'ye do, Mr. Joyce? My secretary; very decent young man that."

The colonel merely coughed behind his buckskin glove. He did not think much of secretaries, and shared Jack Cade's opinion in regard to the professors of the arts of reading and writing. Just then Lady Caroline approached the bank.

"Colonel, are you inclined to back the service in general, and your own regiment in particular? Mr. Patey and I are going to have a race. Of course he gives me a long start. Will you bet?"

"Too delighted to have the chance of losing," said the colonel, with old-fashioned gallantry. "And I'll give odds, too—a dozen pairs to half a dozen. Patey, sustain the credit of the corps in every particular."

"Depend on me, colonel," said Mr. Patey, a long-limbed lieutenant of untiring wind. "Mr. Boyd, take Lady Caroline to her place, and then start us."

Walter Joyce had heard none of this colloquy. He had joined Mr. Biscoe, with whom he had formed a great friendship, and was showing him how to shift from the outer edge of an "eight" and shoot off into a "spread eagle," an intricate movement requiring all your attention, when he heard a sharp crack, followed by a loud shout. Without a word they dashed off to the other end of the lake where the crowd was

greatest. Joyce arrived first. What he saw was a large pool of water where ice had been; floating on it a small round velvet cap trimmed with fur. He looked hastily round. She was not there—then he knew what had occurred.

At that instant his arm was seized by Mr. Biscoe, who whispered, "Wait man! They're fetching the rope!" "Stand back!" he cried, "it'd be too late! Let me go!" and the next instant he was diving beneath the floating fragments of ice.

"It was as near as a toucher," Mr. Boyd said, and he was right. When they pulled him in, Joyce's arm, which had been wound round Lady Caroline, had nearly given way, and the hand with which he had clung to the ice-edge was bruised and bleeding. Just as they were lifted on shore he thought he saw her lips move. He bent his head, and heard one word—"Walter!" Then he fainted.

A QUESTION OF ANCESTRY.

THE French assure us that "rien n'est sacré pour un sapeur." But neither the sapper, nor the French, have any monopoly of irreverence and incredulity in our day. People question everything, past and present. The wisdom and veracity of our ancestors are laughed to scorn, and historians and annalists of all degrees of note and authority are put into the witness-box, and rigidly cross-examined. Niebuhr with Rome, and Cornewall Lewis with Greece, remind one of bulls in a china shop, butting and smashing with might and main among the brittle but beautiful wares of antiquity. There was no Romulus and no Remus, and consequently those interesting babes were never suckled by a wolf. Virgil and the Roman poets are yet mercifully left us; they were but moderns after all, but Homer, in racing phrase, "is nowhere." His existence is denied, and if that by any chance be granted, his authorship of the Iliad is impugned by the literary sappers, who disintegrate the immortal work into a series of separate ballads, written or composed by various "eminent hands," whose names no one knows or can possibly discover. We are not even allowed to imagine that Macbeth killed Duncan as Shakespeare tells us, but we are informed and commanded to believe, that these two rivals for the crown of Scotland fought out their quarrel fairly in the battle-field; that Duncan was slain in single combat, and that Macbeth was no murderer at all. We are also told by the sappers that Richard the Third had not a hunchback, but was a very handsome man, with only a slight and studious stoop in his shoulders; that, moreover, he was a very good king, beloved by the people, and only hated by the nobility, who employed and paid partial historians to blacken his character and misinterpret the events of his reign. We hear also that Henry the Eighth was a soft, kind-hearted gentleman, the victim of designing women, whom he loved but too well, and too foolishly; that his daughter Mary no more deserved to be called "bloody," than his daughter Elizabeth; with various other contradictions of our pre-instilled knowledge or beliefs, sufficient to justify the wary old Sir Robert Walpole in proclaiming all history to be, as in plain Saxon English he called it, "a lie." Saxon! did I say? Yes, I did, but who and what are the Saxons? A very determined sapper, one Thomas Nicholas, Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy, following in the wake of other incredulous philosophers, denies that the English are Saxons, or Anglo-Saxons, and proclaims us to be a nation, in which the Celtic or Keltic blood is more largely predominant than any other, and this more especially in the midland counties, where Shakespeare was born. Here is a sapper with a vengeance! The facts and arguments on which this ethnological iconoclast bases his astounding statement, are to be found in a volume recently published, entitled, "The Pedigree of the English People investigated; an Argument Historical and Scientific on English Ethnology, showing the Progress of Race-amalgamation in Britain from the Earliest Times, with especial Reference to the incorporation of the Celtic Aborigines." Dr. Nicholas, like other sappers, has a good deal to say for himself, and merits respectful attention both for the array and marshalment of his facts, and for the arguments which he builds upon them. Let us hear, and then judge his exposition, that we may either continue to call ourselves Anglo-Saxons, as we have been in the habit of doing for more than a thousand years, or Celto-Saxons, if that be the truer and more accurate definition.

Every one knows now-a-days that the Ancient Britons or Celts of this island were not exactly savages, as it was once the fashion to consider them; inasmuch as they were cunning artificers in gold, iron, and brass, kept cattle, built houses, and cultivated the soil. Diodorus Siculus says, "that the Britons used chariots, as the ancient Greek heroes are reported to have done in the Trojan war; that they were simple in their manners, and far removed from the crimes and wickedness of the men of the present day; that the island was *thickly inhabited;* and that the people of Cornwall were particularly fond of strangers, and civilised in their manners." Cæsar himself, who never penetrated very far into the interior, is forced to admit, evidently much against his inclination, that the Britons of Kent "were not barbarians; that the land was well peopled, and full of houses built after the manner of the Gauls; that the people used brass and gold money, and employed iron rings of a certain weight in barter." He also confessed that the heavy armed legions of Rome were no match

for the British charioteers. The Romans undoubtedly conquered the country—finding the conquest not at all an easy one—and held it, with varying fortune, for four hundred and sixty-five years. During all this time they made no attempt to exterminate or seriously oppress the people, as the Americans have done with the Red Indians within the last three centuries, there being no antipathy of race between the conquerors and the conquered, such as is found between white men and negroes, and the aborigines of America, Australia, and New Zealand.

On the departure of the Romans, the Britons were not only a numerous, but a highly civilised people—as civilisation was considered in that age—and powerful enough, if they could only have managed to agree among themselves, to assert and maintain their independence. But they did not agree; and the result was that they fell a prey to the Saxon invaders, whom one of their princes foolishly invited to take part in their internal commotions. All this is well known. But here a question arises to which the answer is not so clear. Did the Saxons, and after them the Danes, gain such a mastery over the aboriginal Britons as to exterminate the greater portion of them, and drive the small remainder into the mountain fastnesses of Wales, to the remote extremities of Cornwall, and across the Forth to the other side of the then formidable Grampians, that not even the Romans had ventured to cross in their career of conquest? The answer to this question has hitherto been in the affirmative. The ancient historians, and after them the modern school histories, have agreed in accepting this view of the case, and while admitting the English to be a mixed race —more mixed perhaps than any other European people—they have uniformly insisted that at the time of the conquest of England by the Normans, the English people were Anglo-Saxons, with a slight admixture of Danes and other Scandinavians, and that the Cymri, and Celts, were nowhere to be found within the limits of the now United Kingdom, except in Cornwall, Wales, the Isle of Man, Ireland, and the Highlands of Scotland. Dr. Nicholas asserts that this historical statement is untrue, and not only untrue but incredible, that the great majority of the English people at the time of the Conquest were Celts; that the Norman invaders were themselves Celts — recruited to a great extent in Armorica, now called Britany—and that this invasion, as far as numbers went, was a consequent augmentation of the Celtic element in what is now the great and conquering British race: a race that happily, at an early period of its history, adopted the Saxon, or Anglo-Saxon language, in all parts of the island where the Celts did not keep wholly aloof from the invaders, as in Wales, the Isle of Man, and the mountains of Scotland.

The first and only original authority for the commonly received statement, which Dr. Nicholas undertakes to refute, is Gildas. Who was Gildas? He was a monk, born in England in or about the year 514. His name or designation implies that he was a Celt, and is derived apparently from gille or gil, a child, and daorsa, captivity or bondage. He went to Armorica, or Britany, in 550, and at some time during the ten subsequent years wrote his book called De Excidio Britanniæ, in which he told the melancholy story of the degeneracy, conquest, flight, and extermination of the Ancient Britons. He declares that the Britons, reduced to a "wretched remnant," sent their "groans" to the Roman Consul Aëtius, imploring his aid against the Scots and Picts (who, it should be remembered, were Celts as well as they), stating "that the barbarians drove them to the sea, and that the sea drove them back to the barbarians; that these two modes of death awaited them; that they were either slain or drowned." He adds, "that the Romans, affording them no aid, their councillors agreed with that proud tyrant Furthrigern (Vortigern) to invite the fierce and impious Saxons—a race hateful to God and man. Nothing was ever so pernicious to our country. . . . A multitude of whelps came forth from the lair of the barbaric lioness. They first landed on the east shore of the island, and there fixed their sharp talons. . . . Some of the miserable remnant (of the Britons), being taken in the mountains, were murdered in great numbers; others, constrained by famine, came and yielded themselves to be slaves for ever to their foes; others passed beyond the seas with loud lamentations." This very melancholy story was copied from Gildas a century afterwards, by the venerable Bede, and three centuries afterwards by Nennius, and thence found its way, unquestioned, into the ordinary histories of England. Dr. Nicholas expresses the greatest contempt for Gildas as an authority—asserts that there were three or four persons of the name, and that he cannot distinguish which was which; but allowing, for the sake of argument, that he was an authentic person, and the author of the Excidium, he asks how far he is to be considered an adequate authority for the statements he makes? By no means mistrusting his own judgment in the matter, he nevertheless, like a prudent man, supports his conclusions by those of other writers, and notably by those of Gibbon, and of Mr. Thomas Duffus Hardy, the highest living authority on the subject of early English history. Gibbon, speaking of Gildas, describes him as a monk, who, in profound ignorance of human life, had presumed to exercise the office of historian, and had strangely disfigured the state of Britain at the time of its separation from the Roman Empire. Mr. Hardy proclaims the narrative of Gildas to be "meagre," and "involved in a multitude of words;" says that he has but an "indistinct acquaintance" with the events he describes; that he is confused and declamatory; that his statements, except in very few instances, cannot be traced to any known source; and that when he comes to his own time he is, if possible, more obscure than when he discusses bygone ages. As regards his authorities, Gildas himself confesses "that he wrote more from foreign relations, than from written evidences pertaining to his own country."

Having thus demolished, or at all events greatly impaired, the authority of Gildas, the next step of Dr. Nicholas is to ascertain, whether his extraordinary statement as to the all but total extermination of his countrymen gains any corroboration from subsequent facts with which he, and the men of his day were unacquainted. If the Ancient Britons over the greater part of England were exterminated in the sixth century, how could they be numerous in any part of England in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries? It is, in answer to this question, that the Philoceltism of Dr. Nicholas becomes apparent. He denies the extermination, and proves that, although the Celtic language disappeared, in consequence of the gradual adoption by the British masses of the superior Saxon or Anglo-Saxon tongue, the Celts themselves remained. In the time of Athelstan, the Saxon king, five hundred years after the arrival of Hengist and Horsa (if these were the names of real people, and did not signify horse and mare, from the devices on the banners of the invaders), communities of Cymry (Celts) speaking Celtic, and observing their own usages, were in existence in the very heart of the kingdom of Wessex. In the reign of Egbert, four hundred years after the days of Hengist and Horsa, it appears from the "will of King Alfred," published in Oxford in 1788, that the counties of Dorset, Devon, Wilts, and Somerset, were all considered as belonging to the Weal-cynne (Welkin), the dominion or kingdom of the Welsh, or Ancient Britons. "Throughout the country, even in the central parts," says Dr. Nicholas, "such as Bedford, Banbury, Potterton, Bath, we find so late as between the years 552 and 658, mighty battles fought by the Britons proper of those districts, who rose to avenge the oppressive exactions of their conquerors, as is proved by the Saxon Chronicle under those dates. During all this time," he adds, "West Wales, or Cornwall and Devon, great part of Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and the south of Scotland, as well as the whole of Wales, the patria intacta of the Cymry, were in the possession of those Britons who had hitherto kept themselves unmixed with the Teutons." Regarding the manner in which the Britons were disposed of—a hundred and twenty-five years after Gildas wrote of their extermination—a curious instance is recorded in Camden's Britannica, and quoted by Dr. Nicholas. In the year 685, "Egfrid, King of Northumbria, makes a grant of the district of Cartmel with the Britons thereupon, to the see of Lindisfarne." Cartmel is in Furness, Lancashire; and it appears, as Dr. Nicholas states, "that when an Anglo-Saxon king obtained the power of absolute disposal of the native inhabitants of a whole district, he exercised the power not by their extermination, not by their consignment to bondage, but by bestowing them as a holy gift to the Church, thus handing them over to the best protection then existing." In short, the researches of modern authors are sufficient to prove, that the Britons made a gallant fight against both the Saxons and the Danes; that their conquest was not easy; that neither the Saxons nor the Danes ever sought to exterminate, but only to subdue them; and that as time wore on, and Saxon rule became more firmly established, the two races blended together, and the Celts became so Saxonified and the Saxons so Celtified by constant intermarriage, that Danes, Saxons, and Celts gradually fused into one people, called the English. The last conquest of England added to, and did not diminish, the Celtic element, inasmuch as the Normans, who came over with William, were of Celtic origin. This fusion of race was fortunate alike for Celts and Saxons, and produced not only a noble people, but a noble language. The Celts are martial, quick-witted, imaginative, musical, generous, and rash, but lack continuity of purpose, and sustained energy; while the Saxons are solid, plodding, industrious, prudent, slow to anger, sure to complete what they once take earnestly in hand, while they are deficient in wit, fancy, and imagination. The Celtic poetry of Shakespeare, Scott, and Burns, are combined in the English character with the Saxon energy, and sound sense of such men as Watt, Stephenson, Cobden, and Palmerston; while the language that has sprung from the two, promises to be *the* language of the world.

One of the arguments which Dr. Nicholas uses in support of his proposition, and which he might have extended with great advantage, had he been as well acquainted with the Irish and Scottish varieties of the Celtic language as he appears to be with the Cymric, is that the names of nearly all the ancient towns and cities, and all the rivers in Great Britain, are Celtic. In point of fact, the names of all the great rivers and mountain ranges of Europe are Celtic, which, however, proves nothing more than the antiquity of the Celtic race, and goes little towards making out the non-extermination of the British Celts in the sixth century by the Saxons or Angles. A better argument in support of the proposition that the Celts and Cymri were not exterminated, but were gradually amalgamated with their successive military conquerors, is to be found in the very considerable admixture of Celtic words, both Welsh and Gaelic, in the English language, especially in those words that are to a greater extent colloquial and popular than literary, and in the great variety of Celtic surnames borne by the English people as distinguished from those Scotch, Welsh, and Irish surnames, whose Celtic origin is better known.

The compilers of our best English dictionaries, from the days of Samuel Johnson to our own, have greatly neglected the Celtic etymology of the language, and have been content to trace the roots of words either to the Anglo-Saxon, the Danish, the Latin, the Greek, and the French, without troubling themselves to ascertain the origin of words of which these were not the sources. The words "boy" and "girl," which are both Celtic, may serve as instances of this

ignorance on the part of lexicographers. Johnson derives "boy" from the German or Saxon "bube," but admits that the etymology is uncertain. No such word as boy occurs in Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon dictionary, but it is to be found in the Manx language, a branch of the Celtic, with the orthography of bwoie. "Girl" is a word that has puzzled the dictionary makers quite as much as its companion, boy, and they all seek its etymology everywhere except in the right place. One exceedingly wise person (in his own estimation), named Minsheu, traces it from the Latin garrula, because girls are garrulous and fond of prating; and not being quite sure that he is right, suggests that possibly it may be from the Italian girella, a weathercock, "because of their fickleness." The "r" in the word, which is not usually pronounced, seems to have led this learned noodle astray. The vulgar pronunciation, "gal," points to its true source in the Celtic caile and cailinn, pronounced kala and kalinn, and to the Irish coleen. Another possible derivation, which it would be pleasant and flattering to the sex to believe to be the correct one, is from the Gaelic gaol, pronounced "gurl," without the "r," and signifying love. The Anglo-Saxon words for "girl" were piga and maid, the latter of which remains. Piga has been very properly superseded, and only remains in the once common public-house sign of "Pig and Whistle," perverted from "piga and wassail"—i. e., a lass and a glass. The word "grove" is another word of which the grammarians, ignorant of the original language of the British people, can make nothing. Worcester, whose dictionary is one of the best ever compiled, and who does not wholly ignore the Celtic and Cymric elements of the language, derives grove from the Anglo-Saxon graef, a grave or ditch, and quotes from Junius the explanation that "groves are frequently protected by a ditch thrown around them." "More probably," adds Richardson, "because a grove is cut out, hollowed out of a thicket of trees: it is not the thicket itself." But the word existed in England for centuries before a Saxon set foot on the soil, and is no other than the Celtic craobh, pronounced kraov, a tree, and craobhach or kraovag, abounding in trees. The words "cuddle" and "fun," which the dictionaries call low words, and scarcely attempt to define, because they find no traces of them in Anglo-Saxon, Greek, Latin, or French, are pure Celtic. Cuddle is from cadail, to sleep; and fun is from fonn, music;—following the same tone of thought which converted the Anglo-Saxon "glee," which originally meant music, into a synonym for the mirth and pleasure which music produces. The slang word cove, a man or fellow, comes from the Gaelic caomh, pronounced kaov, gentle, courteous. "Dull" and "tall" are Celtic words, of which the origin was unsuspected and unknown at the time when our first dictionaries were published, and mean respectively "blind" and "high," which are their Anglo-Saxon synonyms.

Many hundreds of such words might be cited, but enough, perhaps, has been said, to prove that the language has still a large percentage of the original dialect of the Britons. The patronymics of the English are Celtic to a degree of which Mr. Mark Anthony Lower—the only person who has devoted much time to the subject, and who has compiled a large volume about it—is utterly unconscious. Omitting altogether the Welsh, the Irish, and the Scottish names—the Ap's, the O's, and the Mac's—a very large list of Celtic names in use among the English might be compiled. Among others, all the names that terminate in ton, don, or ley are of Celtic or British origin, or sometimes a compound of Saxon and Celtic. Ton and don are the modern forms of "dun" or town, a Celtic word that in Saxon or Anglo-Saxon would be represented by berg, burgh, and burg. Milton—compounded of a Saxon and a Celtic word—signifies mill, or windmill-hill, or the mill on the downs, or down. Ley or lle is the Celtic for place, whence Stanley, a hybrid word, half Saxon, half Celtic, signifying the stony place. Among other Celtic patronymics cited at random are Capel, from capul, a brood mare; Doran, an otter; Braddon, a salmon; Lack and Lake, from lach, a wild duck; Phillimore, from the Gaelic fille, a garment, or plait, and mor, great; Ross, Roos, and Rouse, from ruis, the alder-tree; Cowan and Cohen, from cuan, the ocean; Muir and Moir, from muir, the sea; More and Moore, from mor, great; Frith a forest; Glen, glenn, and Glyn, a valley; Ennis, Innis, and Inch, an island: Aird, a high place; Belmore, from baile-mor, the great town; Bligh, milk; Burt, sport, mockery; Cagger, a secret; Campkin, from cam, crooked, and cean, head; Camac, from camag, a curl; Cade, from cead, permission; Carr and Kerr, from cearr, wrong, awkward; Dallas, from dall, blind; Dana, from dana, poetical; Dorsay, from daorsa, captivity; Eyre, from eyrie, a high place; Outram, from outram, light, giddy; Morley, from ley, a place, and mor, great; Bain, Bean, and Behan, from bean, white; Campbell, from cam, crooked, and bille, mouth; Egan, from eigim, violence; Turley, from tur, a fortress or town, and ley, a place; Cadell, from cadail, sleep; Mearns, from muirne, the vine; Malthus—slow and silent—from mall, slow, and thos, silent; and our very old and familiar friend Smith, from simid or simit, a hammer. This list might be largely extended, and the subject is well worth the study of one who aspires to give us a book that does not yet exist—the true etymology and origin of the patronymics of Great Britain.

Were I a judge on the bench, deciding on the veracity of Gildas, on which alone rests the story of the extermination of the British, I should pronounce him guilty either of wilful error, or fabrication, or of stupidity. Were he and his reliability not in question, but only the point whether the English are more of an Anglo-Saxon than of a Celtic nation, I think I should decide upon the evidence of local his-

tory, tradition, and philosophy, that our language was far more Anglo-Saxon than our blood. At all events—if I were not sure—I would admit, like Sir Roger de Coverley, "that there was much to be said on both sides."

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. TAVISTOCK TO PLYMOUTH.

THE crow now leaves the moor, and sweeping over the vale of the Tavy alights on the nearest roof of Tavistock, that thriving town among the hills, and sees Dartmoor Tors grey in the distance. On the ruins of the abbey the crow rests to gather traditions of the old abbots—good, bad, and indifferent. The abbey was dedicated to St. Rumon, a forgotten Cornish bishop, whose anatomical relics were brought here by the founder, Ordgar, a Saxon alderman, who held all Devonshire, and every town or city between Frome and Exeter. He was father of Elfrida, the wife of King Edgar. Ordgar's son, Ordulph, completed and endowed this abbey. Ethelred confirmed its privileges; so by degrees the chancel walls grew, and the nave roof spread, and the tower rose, and the great windows bloomed into colour, and the organ's music vibrated through the aisles, the incense fumed, the boys' voices rose to heaven, and the piety of those ages perpetuated itself in that great casket of stone. Then faith grew chill, and wealth corrupted the heart of the chief religious house in the two western counties, and it became the abode of dissolute and revelling monks, fat, cyder-swilling creatures, shunned by the honest people and dreaded by the virtuous. Abbot Livingus, the friend of Canute, who rebuilt the abbey that Sweyn and his Danes had burnt, would have shuddered at such inmates; the learned and pious Aldred, who offered the golden chalice at the Holy Sepulchre, who brought home the sacred palm branch from the Jordan, and who afterwards consecrated both Harold and his slayer, the Conqueror, would have spurned such sons of Belial from the shrine of St. Rumon.

As day by day the old faith grew colder, the pictures and emblems, once so useful as appeals to the senses of unlettered worshippers, degenerated into mere inducements to idolatry. The Tavistock abbots grew rich, proud, and dissolute; discipline grew slack in the convents. Abbot John de Courtenay loved hunting better than preaching, and the monks ran riot; Abbot Cullyng, also deposed by the Bishop of Exeter, connived at private feasts of the monks, and permitted them to appear in Tavistock as gallants of the period, in buttoned tunics and long beaked Polish boots. The vengeance of Heaven found at last the fitting hand. Cromwell, Earl of Essex, destroyed part of the abbey. Henry the Eighth confiscated the other, and bestowed it on Lord John Russell, his favourite, to whose descendant it still belongs. It was worth nine hundred pounds a year then. Since then it has been parted among various devastators. The Bedford Hotel stands on the site of the chapter house, the refectory is a Unitarian chapel, the north gateway is a public library. The still house adorns the vicarage grounds. The abbey, bad as were its inmates, deserved a better fate, if it were only for the fact that the second printing press in England was set up in its precincts.

Just outside the town, on the new Plymouth road, the crow alights on the old gateway of Fitzford—an old Cavalier mansion, of which this entrance alone remains. It was one of this family from whom the well near Princes Town, on Dartmoor, is named—Sir Richard Grenville, one of King Charles's generals, who married the Lady Howard, the heiress of Fitzford, and inherited the property. This lady, the legend says, had previously removed three husbands, and tradition holds her as specially accursed, and still punished for her crimes in the place where they were committed. Transformed to a hound, she is condemned nightly to run from the old gateway of Fitzford House to the park at Okehampton between midnight and cockcrow, and to return to Tavistock with a single blade of grass in her mouth. She will be released when in this slow way all the grass in the park has been picked.

In 1645, Tavistock was visited by Prince Charles, while Plymouth was being invested by his father's army, and the gay lad is said to have always remembered, with horror, the continued wet weather at the town by the banks of the Tavy; still it is nothing to Dartmoor, where the Atlantic vapours are perpetually condensing on the cold tors, and the local rhyme is,

> The west wind always brings wet weather,
> The east wind wet and cold together,
> The south wind surely brings us rain,
> The north wind blows it back again.

The crow searching through Tavistock, soon finds St. Eustace Tower, a spot upon which it is worth alighting; because in this church are preserved gigantic bones said to be those of Ordulph, the son of that Alderman Ordgar who founded Tavistock Abbey. Great stories (in every sense) are told of the Saxon champion. When he came to Exeter with King Edward the Confessor, he is said to have grown enraged at the absence of the porter who should have opened the city gates. Leaping off his horse he wrenched the bars out with his hands, and dragged down parts of the city wall. Then driving in the hinges of the gate with his strenuous feet, he burst in the opposing door. Ordulph is said to have been in the habit of bestriding a river ten feet broad that ran near the house, and chopping off with his knife the heads of deer and oxen, with as much sang-froid as gardeners lop celery.

Tavistock is specially proud of her greatest son, Drake, "the old warrior," as Devonshire country people quaintly call him, who was born at Crowndale, one mile to the south-west, at a house long since removed from the crow's sight. His favourite residence was Buckland Abbey

on the Tavy, four miles from the town. They still preserve there his portrait by Jansen, his sword, his ship drum, and the Bible, which he carried with him round the world. The house was built by Sir Francis on the pleasant site of an old Cistercian abbey, given him by Queen Elizabeth. The barn and belfry still remain, and four arches of the central tower are built into the garrets. In the abbey orchard hard by he paced, musing of Darien and the Pacific, of Spanish galleons and pieces of eight. Let the crow for a moment be biographical. This terror of the Spaniards was the son of a poor yeoman on the banks of the Tavy. In the days of persecution his father fled into Kent, and in Elizabeth's reign took orders and became vicar of Upnor church, where the royal fleet then usually anchored. Francis became a sailor in a small coaster, and his master eventually leaving him his bark and equipment, he grew a thriving man. Suddenly fired by the exploits of Hawkins against the Spaniards "in the Golden South Amerikies" Drake started for Plymouth, sold his ship, and joined Hawkins's last expedition to the Spanish Main. Losing all in this adventure, Drake swore revenge on Spain, and sailed off with three fishing boats and seventy-three men and boys to plunder Spanish towns, burn Spanish ships, and seize Spanish wealth any where, whether on sea or land. He returned to Plymouth on a Sunday, his frail vessels brimming with gold, and all the townspeople came running from church to welcome the hero.

In his next venture, with only five small vessels and one hundred and sixty-four men, Drake circumnavigated the world, and returned home after an eventful voyage of two years and nearly ten months, having taken a plate ship, and plundered half the sea-port towns of Chili and Peru. From that time forth Drake was a thorn in the side of Spain. Half patriot, half buccaneer, he ravaged the coast of Spain, destroyed four castles and one hundred vessels, and, in fact, "singed the King of Spain's beard" all over. He invaded Portugal; he discovered the secret of the Spanish trade with India; he helped to shatter the Armada. Spanish admirals died of broken hearts at the success of Drake. Then came the miserable expedition to the West Indies, when the leaders quarrelled and everything went wrong. Baskerville failed to cross the Isthmus of Darien, and burn Panama; Hawkins died of vexation; fever broke out at Nombre de Dios; and Drake at last died, partly of disease and partly of a broken heart. The sailors lowered him to his grave in the sea off Porto Bello:

> The waves became his winding sheet, the waters were his tomb,
> But for his fame, the ocean sea was not sufficient room.

For a smaller mercy Tavistock is also grateful, namely, for being the birthplace of William Browne, a humble contemporary of Spenser and Shakespeare, and author of Britannia's Pastorals, a poem highly eulogised by Lambe, Hazlitt, and others of that school. Browne was a tutor to the Earl of Carnarvon, who was slain at the battle of Newbury, acquired a competency under the patronage of the Earl of Pembroke, purchased an estate, and wrote pastoral verses, without vigour, but never wanting in elegance. Selden, Drayton, Wither, and Ben Jonson admired him, but he soon passed out of mind. His Inner Temple Masque, produced at court, was not printed till a hundred and twenty years after his death, and all his poems but this would probably have perished, but for a single copy of them preserved by Warton. Milton is supposed to have imitated him, and carried him further in L'Allegro and Lycidas. In his prettiest episode, The Love of the Walla and the Tavy, he sings the praises of a brook that runs past Kilworthy and the home of the Glanvilles. One of the choicest passages of the Tavistock poet is his description of a rose:

> Look, as a sweet rose fairly budding forth
> Betrays her beauties to the enamoured morn,
> Until some keen blast from the envious north
> Kills the sweet bud that was but newly born.
> Or else her rarest smells delighting
> Make herself betray,
> Some white and curious hand inviting
> To pluck her thence away.

The Glanvilles were of Tavistock. They were lawyers by right of race. The son of a judge of the Common Pleas, Sir John was speaker and king's serjeant before the civil war. The Puritans took away his seat in parliament, and sent him to prison, to note cases and judgments behind the bars of the Tower. At the Restoration he was again safe for high rank, when death suddenly stepped in and called him out of court. He was made serjeant in company with Dew and Harris, two other Devonshire lawyers, and Fuller describes the three as thus spoken of:

> One { gained / spent / gave } as much as the other two.

Lastly, Tavistock boasts justly of Mrs. Bray (who has made the bowers of the Tamar and Tavy the scenes of her pleasant stories), Ford of Fitzford, Henry de Pomeroy, and Trelawny of Trelawne.

Near Kilworthy, the seat of the Glanvilles, the crow alights in one of the trees of Rowdon wood, remembering that a strange and exceptional whirlwind visited this place in 1768. A stream of storm swept through the wood, cutting a passage of about forty yards in width, tearing up huge oaks by the roots, as if they had been radishes, and carrying their branches off, like drift on a torrent; it then rolled up the valley of the Tavy, and exhausted its rage in the barren wilderness of Dartmoor. Its coming and its going were alike mysterious.

On its way to Plymouth, the crow descends, near Lamerton, on the chimney of Collacombe Barton, the old seat of the Tremaynes, built by Sir Thomas Wise, in the reign of King James. It was garrisoned for King Charles, and taken by the parliament men. Fuller describes two

brothers of this family, who were twins. Nicholas and Andrew could only be distinguished by the colour of their doublets and the plumes in their hats. They felt like pain even when apart, and loved to walk, travel, sit, sleep, eat, and drink together, till Providence, sympathising with their friendship, eventually permitted them both to be slain in the same skirmish at Newhaven, in France.

Once more on his flight to Plymouth the crow slackens over Lamerton, because there the father of Rowe, the poet, was rector. Rowe was a vain, handsome man who became under-secretary of state to Queen Anne, and whose vivacity and gaiety rendered him very agreeable to Pope. His Jane Shore was approved by Johnson; his Lady Jane Grey by no one. Mrs. Oldfield, the great actress, pronounced Rowe the best elocutionist she had ever heard. He is said to have been fond of flourishing, at the Cocoa Tree in St. James's-street, a snuff-box set with diamonds that some foreign prince had given him.

And now, leaving the region of the tors, the crow strikes out for Plymouth Sound, where the giant Breakwater spreads its defiant arms like those of a strong swimmer against the waves, and the Eddystone on the distant rock raises its votive beacon.

THE PLANTING OF THE VINE.

A THOUGHT FROM THE GERMAN.

I.

Old Father Noah sat alone
Within his tent at morn,
With such a shadow on his face
As spoke a heart forlorn.
"What ails thee, Noah?" said a voice,
Like soft, sweet music pour'd;
And Noah, looking up, beheld
The angel of the Lord.
"Forgive me, Lord!" he said and sigh'd,
"If wrongfully, I think,
But I am thirsty, nigh to death,
And know not what to drink!"

II.

"To drink?" the gracious angel said:
"See, where the streamlets run,
And all the gladsome waters leap,
Rejoicing to the sun."
"'Tis true, dear Lord! but thought recals
The mournful myriads drowned—
Brave men, fair women, lovely babes,
And cattle of the ground.
I loathe all water for their sakes—
The beautiful, the young—
It tastes of blood, it smells of death;
'Tis poison to my tongue!"

III.

The radiant angel's lovely face
Shone bright with heavenly fire:
"Noah, such pity for mankind
Beseems their second sire.
Wait till I come!" Like lightning flash
He vanished up the skies,
And like a lightning flash returned,
Ere Noah raised his eyes.
"Take this," he said, and held aloft
A vine-stock branching fair:
"Heaven's noblest gift to human kind,
Entrusted to thy care."

IV.

"Go, plant it on the sunny hills;
For health and length of days,
And press its fruit for joyous drink,
And the Creator's praise.
It bears no taint of pain or death,
And fails not to impart
Strength to the body and the mind,
And gladness to the heart.
But curse not water, e'en in thought,
God's blessing most benign,
Fountain of beauty and of life,
Mother of men and wine."

TO THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

THE REPORTS OF A VOLUNTEER COMMISSIONER.

SIX IN NUMBER.

Report the First.

The present writer read, with much interest, your Lordship's circular, addressed to the managers of the London theatres, and has followed, with equal interest, though with some slight astonishment, the correspondence and remarks that have thereupon ensued. It has been pleasant to him to observe that on both sides of this question there is much, of various degrees of merit, to be said, and that, in especial, the opposite parties in the controversy, which was brought about by your Lordship's excellent (if somewhat timid) advice, assert the whiteness of black and the blackness of white with edifying affability. The manager of a prominent theatre, in recognition of the invitation given in the circular in question, advises your Lordship to take severe measures with the Music Halls, whence, according to the opinion of this gentleman (well entitled to be heard), the mischief originally comes. Certain Music Hall proprietors, on the other hand, write to the papers, accusing the Theatres of all that is improper, vaunting the spotless purity of their own establishments, and challenging contradiction. Similar differences of opinion exist amongst those members of the public at large, who have joined the fray. As between Music Halls and Theatres, the quarrel appears to be merely a revival of an old difficulty between the managers of rival classes of entertainments, and, as such, has little or no real interest for the public. But in the matter really touched upon in your Lordship's remarks, and from which the controversialists have somewhat wandered, the public is gravely interested.

It is said that the managers of Theatres have been, and are gradually more and more drifting into a habit of exhibiting on their stages, improprieties, vitiating to the public taste, and hurtful to the public morals.

It is suggested that the ladies who are engaged to play in the pantomimes and burlesques, to which it may be presumed your Lordship's remarks especially apply, seize with eagerness the opportunity of displaying too much of their charms to appreciative audiences. Contrariwise, it has been urged in more than one letter by the managers of Theatres, and by casual critics, that the fault is not with them, but with the public; that the public has ceased to be decorous itself, and calls aloud for a want of decorum in its entertainers; that managers give, in a word, the kind of entertainment, which has at last brought upon them the mild thunders of your Lordship's office, because that kind was imperatively demanded by their exacting supporters. This is a serious charge to bring against a public; but it is a still more serious matter when the accused assumes its truth and glibly runs off, as one of the slipshod topics of the day, with commonplaces about the indecencies of the stage. People who talk thus forget the important fact that the drama with a large class of spectators takes the place of books, and is a popular instructor for good or for evil, of vast importance — an engine of enormous power in forming the public tastes, which it is of the highest importance to keep in good working order—an institution which loses all its influence for good, if discredit be allowed to be cast upon it. The state of the theatre fairly reflects, although, occasionally, it may be conceded, in a somewhat distorted mirror, the state of the society of the day; at any rate, the tone of the stage is in a great degree derived from the tone of the audiences—each reacts upon the other; and, if mischief be done, it is difficult to apportion the blame among the parties concerned.

The first important question, however, would appear to be this: Is mischief being done? Have we been getting gradually worse and worse, until we have all imperceptibly assisted in the creation of a nuisance that now cries aloud for suppression?

Your Lordship yourself discreetly confines your remarks to "some of the metropolitan theatres," although the circular is sent to all; but the fact of the solemn warning being addressed to every manager, would make it appear that there must be several who have incurred your Lordship's displeasure. In certain evidence given before a committee of the House of Commons, your Lordship expressed yourself satisfied with the powers vested in the office of Lord Chamberlain, considering them sufficient for all necessary purposes of supervision, and, in case of need, suppression. From this it would appear that the observations in the press and the remarks from other sources which instigated the circular of the 28th of January last, applied to so many theatres that your Lordship felt it impossible to exercise the authority vested in the Lord Chamberlain's office, and that the evil had attained too great a height to be cured by a coup-de-main, and that gradual measures were judged the most likely to be successful.

A constant playgoer from his youth up, the gravity of the charge thus made against managers, actors, and audiences, considerably startled the Commissioner who has the honour of making this report. He was concerned to think that he had assisted at entertainments, at which costumes were worn of an impropriety so marked, as to call for the interference of the State. He was horrified to think that he had permitted the ladies of his family to sanction by their presence exhibitions of questionable decency. Much disturbed in mind, thinking it possible that there might be special reason for complaint that had hitherto escaped his eyes, and anxious to see how matters really stood, he formed himself into a Volunteer Commission of one, and devoted himself to the study of the pantomimes and burlesques of the season. He also carefully studied the kind of entertainment presented at Music Halls. And with (or without) your Lordship's permission he has now the honour to lay his report at your feet.

Your Commissioner may respectfully point out to your Lordship that in the course of his remarks upon the numerous performances he has attended, there will be found observations on subjects not specially connected with the department of Lord Chamberlain, and not in any respect under your Lordship's authority. Your Commissioner, being a volunteer, and under his own command, has not thought it necessary to regulate his report by any strict rules of departmental discipline, and has no doubt that such cases will frequently occur in the present document.

In fact, the whole of the earlier portion of the report now presented, treats of matters foreign to your Lordship's department. That they may soon be brought under strong influence, and sharp discipline, is much to be desired.

Report the Second.

THE ROYAL PANDEMONIUM PALACE.

That we are the most moral people on the face of the earth, was once almost the boast of the complacent Briton. Now, such a vaunting would be disclaimed as arrogance, and in something of this key: we have our faults, and failings, and vices; and in the metropolis, particularly, there is much to amend, scenes of rude vice, the squalor of wickedness, as it were, arising from the vastness and the complex organisation of the great city, which we call, with pardonable pride, the capital of the world. But in the English people, and the London people, there is a true moral sense, after all; and none of that coarse publicity, that flaunting of vice which so shocks us in Paris. We may justly thank Providence for having a police force, as well as a House of Lords, which, directed by a nice public opinion, takes care that vice shall pay the proverbial homage to virtue, or go at once to the Station. "No, sir," says Mr. Complacent Briton, "we may have a scandal now and again; but we have none of your brazen Paris morals over here. They must keep in the dark. Men are pretty much the same all the world over. I don't set up to be squeamish, but we won't have decency affronted here."

Some such remark Mr. Complacent Briton has often made to the observing foreigner, parting with him, perhaps, in the neighbourhood so congenial to aliens, or actually, perhaps, in sight of a mouldy square, towards the smaller hours; at one side of which rises a large illuminated lantern of Moorish pattern, all ablaze with windows, and stars, and devices, and through whose doors are pouring in and out streams of men and women. This flaming tabernacle, he will be told, is the Royal Pandemonium Palace; and, as an acute Frenchman, he will take its measure, as it were, in a second—for it speaks in a language that he perfectly understands—and with a smile of delight will enter to spend his night there.

It seems like a great vicious beehive, all seething within and without, with life and humanity. The blaze and the light in which the insects revel suffuse it through and through. Round the openings rises the eternal din of arriving broughams and hansoms, their setting down and driving away. The far-off East-ender and shop boy, passing by, gazes with simplicity, and thinks this must be a very palace of delights, and is tempted in. Wiser men than he, who read their newspapers conscientiously, may be tempted in too, perhaps, even into bringing their wives and daughters, for have they not read in broadsheets that no more admirably "conducted" place exists, and that we are under the deepest obligations to its "enterprising" proprietor.

Light in floods is always enticing—it is beauty, richness, colour, gold, silver, jewels; and there is plenty of it here. Were there another intelligent foreigner, with misgivings as to whether all this were not a sham, a mere pinchbeck imitation of his dear Paris, which would break down on examination, and discover the uncouth John Bull morality underneath; his mind would be set at rest by a short study of the successively arriving hansoms, which stream up, each filled with what is termed "a lovely burden;" that is, with more ermine, and velvet, and bags of yellow hair, than would be quite agreeable to Mr. Complacent Briton. Each lovely burden descends briskly, pays her fare handsomely, and is gallantly helped out by a bearded, brawny officer of the establishment, dressed in gold lace, wearing earrings, who greets each with a natural familiarity, founded on an acquaintance of many thousand successive nights. The number of these burdens is something alarming. As it grows towards eleven, it becomes a perfect block; burden after burden is set down, and hurries in, fearful of losing a second, for the moments are golden. Up comes, too, the frequent brougham, dark and glistening—the lady from the opera—who drops the white-tied "votary of pleasure," and drives away. The votary of pleasure hurries in. Let us do the same.

Through the blaze at the entrance, we admire those noble soldiers, each about six feet two high, splendid men, privates in a corps, enrolled, no doubt, in defence of the order and morality of the house. They wear blue and gold tunics, with bright scarlet facings, scarlet and gold képis, and white belts, exquisitely pipe-clayed. The uniform size of these heroes is something amazing; their great chests and stalwart arms seem suitable for ox-felling, for which they are not required. In a well conducted establishment like this, Mr. Complacent Briton will be told, where all classes are mixed up in the pursuit of rational pleasure, it is quite necessary to have strong men on the spot, who can rally in a moment, and stamp out the beginning of disorder. In a well-conducted establishment

where a vast quantity of liquor is drunk, and where vast numbers of the class on whom liquor has a decided effect, attend, the strong men act promptly before the police can be troubled, and with a creditable roughness cast out anything like drunkenness, upon the streets, when of course it is some one else's business to deal with it. On any idiotic cries, or challenges to fight, the strong men rush up, seize the disturber by the throat, and hustle him out in a second. For the place must be well conducted.

What a scene inside!—vestibules blue, gold, and white, all champagne and glorified bars, and velvet sofas, and little pigeon-hole boxes, and painted Houris serving drinks. The crash of music comes from within; charming gentlemen are in crowds, all apparently devoted to lovely burdens, who seem to be never weary of accepting homage in the shape of what the Bar of England, behind which the Houris stand, can offer. Inside, what a spectacle!—loftiness, decoration, majesty, size, and a dim dome-like spaciousness not to be surpassed. Even the Frenchman owns that his dear Paris cannot boast its equal. Think of the noble stage, with its enormous opening, the grand orchestra in front, nearly a hundred strong, crashing out; then gallery after gallery ascending, as it were, to be lost in the cathedral-like roof, lost in the mists of too much light! But one may think more of the enormous crowd with which that vast tabernacle is bursting, with which it is boiling over—not the "sea of heads," still and steady, which is known to theatres, but an ever-circulating mass, floating to and fro, indistinct, undistinguished to a great degree. There is lovely burden after lovely burden, itself to another great degree glittering with the jewels and gold of the quality to which the burden itself is partial. They seem happy and in the highest spirits, and well may bless the kindly patronage which affords them this magnificent shelter and gaily encourages their presence; but at the same time regulates them with a firm hand, the hand of the strong men. For this is "a well-conducted place of amusement," and every young gentleman who is making his manners, or marring his head, comes to the Royal Pandemonium.

Down in the great area, what eating and drinking, what glittering silver tankards — or seeming silver — what Bass, what Allsopp, what innumerable "sodas"! Animated and crowded as that huge space appears, it is in truth the dullest part of the house; for here are herded the stupid homely souls who come merely to look at the magnificent entertainments provided on the stage, and for whom, I suspect, the proprietor has a befitting contempt. Even the strong men in their scarlet and blue uniform—handsome Life Guardsmen they look too—we can see despise these clodhoppers, who know nothing of life, and who do not come to see life. They do not order champagne wine for themselves, or for lovely burdens. They do not command costly suppers; they pay their shilling or so at the doors. Yet they are scrupulously treated; not for the world would the least disrespect be offered to them, or to the humdrum wives and daughters whom they bring with them to stare at the show. Nothing can be more generous than this treatment, for no sort of account can be found in it; to carpers like the present writer, the proprietor of this well-conducted place of amusement can retort, "Look down there at my patrons—the pure wives and daughters of England. *They* come to me. What are these idle charges?"

Well may they stare at the noble scenery that seems to run riot in fancy and colouring, at the endless troops of dancing seraphs, who seem to live, quite naturally, above in golden branches, to float in the air, and hang from clouds in the most natural way. So with the orchestra, its general leading them facing the audience. As we survey this motley crowd, all engaged in what is called harmless pleasure, it is impossible not to consider it a *school* of some sort, open every night in the year, and which is teaching all the young gentlemen and ladies who resort there lessons of some description.

The scholars, if we consider the hour during which the academy is open, resort there in thousands, some nearly every night, and for some their studies have quite a fascination. Some arrive from the opera in full dress—with opera hat, white tie. Every one newly come from the country repairs there at once, eager to see a little scholastic life. But it offers far more advantages to the mere youth—clerk or shopboy—who has here a career not to be pursued under other circumstances, so advantageously. In this splendid realm he gains an importance, a spurious man-about-township, at a cheap cost. He can ruffle it like a real gallant, according to his degree. Here he can generously "stand" refreshment, and purchase the converse and the smiles of lovely burdens; from here he

can return, boasting, to any less fortunate brethren of the counter, of his acquaintances. So with the young soldier from Aldershot, so with the "city man," the "gent," the "swell," and the curious species known as the "Champagne Charlie." There are various ways of showing oneself "a real gentleman;" but here we can see there is one true touchstone, that is, remunerating everybody magnificently. To have the good word or the recognition of the strong men in uniform and of the glorious army of red waiters—they serve us in flame-coloured jackets—is indeed most precious. I see high-spirited young fellows, of "the true breed," giving their five shilling pieces and half sovereigns to these noble giants, who obsequiously touch their caps and go on before them, making way. To be well known at the Royal Pandemonium is grand. Many a gay spark pays heavily, but cannot succeed, for there is an art in doing this. To be "admitted to the canteen," to have that entrée, is indeed happiness. There, as Lamb says, "earth touched heaven." This select abode is under the stage, and is crowded by lovely burdens; but mark—hither resort the ladies of the stage, enwrapped in cloaks; here is your true bouquet and charm.

Many sigh to enter here, but a strong man, of yet vaster proportions than his brethren, is told off specially to guard. Only "real" gentlemen and friends of the house are admitted. The powers of recognition in the strong men must be carefully kept alive, or they forget old friends in the strangest way. But to reach the *stage* is bliss, reserved but for very few indeed. The tenderest friendship with the strong men, based on true pecuniary esteem, will not purchase that. Happy warders! Their lives are laid in smooth places; with them it is eternal drink, their friends treating them, from the very pride of that office. Indeed, to be even one of the army of waiters, wearing a flame-coloured jacket, seems almost a competence. Every one loads them with benefactions. At the various brilliant bars they come in for their seizings, in the shape of, I fear, unauthorised draughts. In every corner, too, are little stalls for cigars and trinkets—fans, what not, each controlled by a fascinating and highly decorated shopwoman. With these the white-tied Elegans in their apprenticeship to life, converse easily and with pleasant badinage, so as to be the envy of their friends and despair of young clerks, but have to buy their favours very dearly —a sovereign for, perhaps, ten minutes' banter, is high. Gold is expected. Everywhere gold and silver is pouring out. The admiring shopboy would give the world to have gold to give away in this fashion.

Hark to M. Breviary's orchestra, full and crashing. The flame-coloured curtains have gone up for the opening of the superb ballet. The Loves of the Water Lilies, with the skies and mountains even, rising behind, with the exquisite colours dazzling, and the waterfall trickling down with a melodious gush. In this department the Royal Pandemonium holds its own: to give the proprietor his due, so does it hold its own also, as the thousand and one limbs group and wind, and fall into artistic shapes to the sweetest music, and the fairy-like dresses glitter. Then a cave opens, and down the centre, from Paradise surely it seems to the boy clerks and shopmen, comes the famous NUDITA, bounding down as if stepping on a cloud. Nudita is from some great Italian house, her services, we are told, being purchased at an enormous sum. These services are certainly of the most amazing sort, and an excess of modesty, which should have been left outside, causes some of us to droop our eyes in confusion. At another time the incomparable Minette, lured at great cost from some French dancing garden, throws us into ecstasies of delight by her diverting piquancies, kicking a supernumerary's hat off with one skilful touch, introducing for the first time to us the archest and most midnight of Paris dances. The best music hall singing, the best tumbling, the best glees sung decorously in black suits and evening dresses—for the *tone* of the house must be kept up—the best of everything. The army of entertainers behind the curtain is prodigious—no cost is spared. The beggarly shillings that Cox the shopkeeper gives for self and wife surely do not pay for this, neither does the profit on his meagre pint. It is wonderful how it can be done!

Such is the romantic view of the Royal Pandemonium Palace. So it appears to the young mind behind desk or counter, all the day long. It is an enchanting and fascinating temple; and he longs for night to set in, when he can go down with a friend and cheaply learn what life is. To know a real "Pandemonium girl" with that rank, is considered the height of *ton*, that is, provided it *be* known that he knows one. To this end vast sacrifices are made. To devote the Sunday to taking down one of these young ladies to Greenwich, with a

select party, is what few can attain to. Wan decayed faces, sickly with over drink and over smoke, attest what suffering is undergone in this pursuit. To be able to take a friend past one of the glorious giants in scarlet and blue and receive a gracious nod, that is another goal. A word from a singer, is quite a crown, for it betokens freedom of the stage. Such is the picture of this "well-conducted place of amusement," which is praised in the leading journal, which is open every night, which has firm root in this great metropolis, and which has been so successful, that by and by, we shall have copies multiplied all over the city. Yet for all its admirable conducting, a more deadly or pernicious school of vice cannot be imagined.

There are certain immoral windmills which it would be sheer folly to fight with, and which it would be impossible to control; but it is not too much to say that the Royal Pandemonium Palace, Foreigneering-square, has worked the ruin of thousands of foolish boys; has shown them a smooth and expeditious road to destruction, and is doing its work steadily every night, and adding to the many problems by which London is embarrassed. The whole system, in every detail, is conducted on the most demoralising principles. The squandering of money invited at every turn; the bravos dressed up in stage uniform, and who are merely the hired bullies of the place; the affectation of strict decency and order, the very magnificence, are all so many disguises, and add to the fatal character of the show. The Royal Pandemonium Palace is, indeed, no more than a vast *public-house*, "admirably conducted;" but really no more in principle than the humble ale-house, where the fiddler or Ethiopian is introduced to play for the company.

But mark the precious inconsistency of our police and magisterial regulations. If it was known that to such a place Moll Flanders and her companions resorted to meet old friends and make new ones, the licence would be lost for ever. Some of the Haymarket refreshment houses which Moll is fond of patronising, are pursued with merciless rigour, and the owners properly dragged to the magistrate and fined. But with the Royal Pandemonium it is a different story. It is so well conducted that not a dozen or so, but hundreds of Moll Flanderses are invited to assemble, and assemble with exceeding profit to themselves. The police would not for the world bring the excellent proprietor before the magistrate; for he is unwearied in co-operating with them. Punctually at twelve the house is cleared, it is not kept open a second beyond the time. The gaudy bullies hustle every one out. When the dancing licence is renewed each year, the inspector has not a fault to find with this well-conducted house. To it, unless something be done, and done speedily, we shall owe the *public* recognition of vast undesirable French habits and morals; and it is to the shame of legislation, that such an institution should be protected by the law, which affects to reprove its principle. At this moment, under ordinary magistrates' law, this plague-spot, which is training up so many dozen per night of George Barnwells and Brummagem Lovelaces, might be stamped out. There is a law against the business or pastime that goes on, and even against the "harbouring" or assembling of certain special classes of the community. In other cases this is strictly, and even harshly enforced. But these parties do not keep vast cathedrals blazing with lights and colour, they have not capital, nor do they give large employment, nor do they keep hired bullies — and above all they have not influential patrons, of wealth and rank. A few intelligent policemen, well acquainted with London faces and London figures, would see enough in ten minutes to justify a summons, and a heavy fine; which, repeated persistently, would soon reduce the attractions of the place to good music, fine dancing, exquisite scenery, and of course shut up the place. How the intelligent Frenchman will smile and shrug, when he learns that my Lord Chamberlain cannot lay his finger on places like this—that *really* require his supervision. Royal Pandemonium Palace, indeed. It is a scandal that anything "Royal" should prefix what is merely a factory, busy every night in working up material for bankruptcy, divorce, and police courts, for the hospital, for the grave, and certainly not for heaven.

HERRINGTOWN-BY-THE-SEA.

If you like your sea-side place "au gratin," if you enjoy walking all day on fried breadcrumbs, Herringtown is exactly the sort of place for you; for the small gravel, of which its sea-side terraces are composed, is for all the world like those breadcrumbs on which roasted larks usually recline, and is as aggravating to the mind as it is distressing to the feet.

Fishermen, riding-masters, small men with

enormous telescopes, letters of apartments, keepers of circulating libraries, Ethiopian serenaders, German bandsmen, boot, saddle, to horse, and away to Herringtown-by-the-Sea; for a real live ex-duchess, Princess of Pinchengripzen, has arrived there, and all Cockneydom is hurrying thither. Away, snobs; fly, toadies, fly; for is there not a real duchess daily perambulating the Marine Parade at Herringtown-by-the-Sea? Rejoice, snobs and toadies; for you can now stare at her, and elbow her, and no one can say you nay, and it is something to have been even within twenty yards of a real ex-duchess.

No one respects well-bred ladies of rank more than ourselves. When dignity is meekly and justly worn, we admire the forbearance and self-control of the wearers, and we regard them as not uncommendable rulers of mankind; but whose gorge would not rise at these respectable people at Herringtown-by-the-Sea, crowding round a quiet invalid lady and her children, gaping at her two gigantic and intensely sedate footmen, jostling her dowdy German governess, staring, pointing, whispering, and giggling? It is loathsome, it is vulgar, it is uncourteous, it is snobbish. There is no loyalty in it, for not one of the genteel mob would lay down a chignon or a whisker to serve the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen. It is merely a new form of the love of money; for power is only money grown rank, and these idiots run about after a duchess because she typifies wealth, success, and social importance. She might be a Poppœa, instead of a good amiable wife: she might be hideous as Sycorax, instead of being fair and comely as she is—the fools would still run, gape, crowd, intrude, and stare, and render the great lady's life a burden to her.

In spite of all this base development of the worst points of the English character, shown even by the clergy at Herringtown (toadies too), who actually strike up God Save the Queen when this poor quiet lady tries to steal softly as a mouse, unobserved, out of the church, Herringtown is a pretty and pleasant place. It is mighty pretty of an autumn morning before breakfast, with the surf creaming along the shore, the ocean of a delicious aquamarine colour, melting into sapphire; the fishing boats getting greyer as they recede towards the horizon; the ruins of the old Norman castle rising golden on the cloudy cliff; a German band clashing in some distant square, and mellowed into enchanted music; pretty nursemaids and their rosy charges, laughing and chasing; and, at the great weather-beaten capstan on the Parade, a gang of brown old sailors and sturdy sailor-boys working in a collier brig, that is going to discharge her cargo; while yonder, on the beach, a man tosses up spadefuls of wet silt, that in the morning sunlight flash like diamond dust.

I have a disagreeable suspicion, though, founded on some continental observation, that, spite of the innocence of this tranquil little place, the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen, amiable and confiding as she looks, has a mind not unclouded with the old Pinchengripzen fears. I am convinced that she has given orders to be strictly watched, although in an unobtrusive way. There they are; I know their steely eyes, hard mouths, and askance looks. They can't disguise themselves from me, for I have seen them all before in the Unter den Linden, on the Boulevards, in the Prater, in the Königsplatz, on the Boompjees. You see that well-dressed, portly city man on the Parade, just by the third seat—city man who has evidently travelled—Spy, revolver in his right-hand pocket! That young swell cross-legged, lavender gloves, bunch of violets in his button-hole, holding Maltese dog by a purple ribbon, while he carelessly swings a sword-stick—Spy. Remark that old feeble clergyman, with black worsted gloves, one hand on a Bath chair, which contains fat woman in black—Spy—revolver up the small of his back—Spy double distilled. Look at that jolly red-faced bourgeois on the seat by the great hotel, who draws you into conversation about Pinchengripzen politics (may they be accursed!)—Spy again, hot from Scotland Yard yesterday, and just off the Fenian business, came by last boat from Cork. He is better known as Sergeant M'Donald, and a very sharp hand; I see him smile when the idiotic crowd, not having a clear notion of what the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen is like, close round her children's German governess, or her butler's wife and two big footmen, and are just as happy as if the old dowdy hag were the real ex-Duchess herself. Innocent happy people that we are, the greater part of us do not know a spy when we see him.

It has been a tremendous night. When I got up this blessed morning, the gusts of rain were driving past the window at the rate of fifteen thousand miles an hour, and the wind was roaring like a wild beast round the corners of the Parade. The snobs will have a miserable day of it, for the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen will not show. The spies will have a glorious time of it at pool, for there will be no one to watch but each other.

"Fine herrings—fresh and fine O—Her-r-r-r-r-r-ings!" shouts a weather-beaten old fisherman, with one eye; he wears a yellow oilskin sou'-wester, and an orange-brown short smock, peculiar to Herringtown fishermen, colour not unbecoming, as toning down the superabundant bricky-brown of their hardy complexions. His trousers have been artfully framed out of stubborn cloth, and are of enormous width, as if the owner expected to grow more corpulent. The hardy Norseman answers my hail, and brings his tray to the door. Small silvery whiting, gently reposing side by side; silver-spangled herrings, with red inflamed eyes, as if they had been taking too much, and mouths wide open as if they had died screaming "murder;" a bland featureless plaice or two; a hideous John Dory. The hardy Norseman drips with excessive rain.

"Rough night? well, raythor that way. Hard life for them as toils all night; terrible

rough surely—Wouldn't have been out in our little vessel, The Laughing Polly, for two guineas? Only wished he could make that with that 'ere little lot of fish, as had cost him and his mates some risk and trouble to get on board. He and his missus would be blessed glad if they got sixteen shillings for the lot. It was blowing pretty stiff just now, and that was all about it; and there was a vessel, one of Green's big Indiamen out there, lying off Brightown Head, that would be on shore soon, as sure as eggs were eggs, if the wind didn't change. Couldn't make no way, they couldn't, and seemed, poor souls, drawing on land, nearer and nearer every hour, poor souls." Here the ancient mariner, who smelt of gin, moved by a not unmanly grief, wiped his blind eye with the scale-spangled sleeve of his tan-coloured smock, and withdrew, shouting, no doubt to conceal his feelings, his well-known war cry of, "Fresh herrings—fresh and fine O—Her-r-r-r-r-ings!"

I sat down and pondered. Should I call for help; followed by a brave crew of tan-coloured fishermen, and collecting all the spare jib-booms, main-tops, and spare oars we could find, should we rush "To the lifeboat! To the lifebo-o-o-o-o-o-oat!" and pull away for the wreck? I would, however, first finish my last piece of toast, then ring for my boots, bind myself up in a mackintosh, tie a red comforter round my neck, toss off a bottle of brandy, make my will, pay my bill, order dinner (but perhaps, I might not return?), then, with some spare sculls on my shoulders, make for the wreck. Of course there would be a nabob on board, or, better still, a nabobess, young, fair, and beautiful, with four millions of gold stowed away under hatches in his, or her, brass-nailed trunk.

Yes, the nabob must be saved, let what will happen. Beaumanoir, to the rescue. My father had Norman blood in his veins, or he said he had, therefore I suppose I have some too. It stirs within me now. Away through the scud and thunder, the lightning and the hail, and the spray froth scattering like snow along the shore. Now, then, my lads, take the tarpauling off the lifeboat and in with her, for there's a big sea on, and we must be off. Lift her keel over the shingle. There's a valuable life to be saved yonder. Three cheers for the British Constitution and the good old Church of England! Pardon my tears. They are tears of excitement. Now, there she floats; unship your oars; you Number Three, take the bow oar; Number Two avast hauling; belay there every one of you. Pull away, lads. Hearts of oak are our midships, sons of guns are our men. Cheerly, boys, to the rescue. Where's the brandy? Now, then, with a will—I've made mine. All right, come put your backs into it. Mind that big wave—bravely done. Now we near her. How the poor fellows scream! Yes, there is the nabob—there he is, yellow as a lizard, waving a yellow handkerchief from the main chains. I'll flourish my hat. We are here—to the rescue. The nabob bows. Now, then, men, take care of the floating spars—in between them, and——.

One bound and I am in the main chains, shaking hands with the paralysed nabob. He screams with delight and embraces me. He points to a black chest at his feet inscribed in large white letters, like a tombstone, "Four millions and a half!" I can hardly hear what he says, but I think it is: "Gallant preserver, half of this worthless wealth is yours, if you will save me." All right. Three cheers for the British Constitution, and three more for the Church of Ireland. You lubbers there on the round top, you white livered skulkers, come down and help to save the vessel. Who is that pale fellow whetting his knife on the binnacle? O, that's the ship's cook gone mad from fright! Tie his arms behind him, and one of you throw him into the long boat. You fellow out there on the spanker boom, come down and bear a hand, or I'll fire a broadside at you. Take care boys; give the wreck a good wide berth. She's lifting off the rocks, the next time she strikes it'll be all over. The women first; you scoundrel, move a step to get into the boat, and I'll cut you down. Don't be alarmed, sir; you are quite safe: but the chest! Lower that chest gently, boatswain; if you drop it edgeways it will stave in the boat. Gently there; so, so. Now it's in; back water, my lads. Three cheers for the Army and Navy. Now, with a will. No talking, men. I want to hear what this gentleman says. You wish to give me the four millions and a half, because you have another four millions in the vessel that got into Southampton last Tuesday? Generous man! The name of your life-preserver? My name is——"

The nabob does not wait to hear my reply. With a very peculiar smile, he throws up the lid of the treasure chest. Horror! The chest is brimming with rolls of *brass* sovereigns! Brummagem, every man jack of them—the sovereigns, not inappropriately entitled *duffer* sovereigns, that are coined for barter with the sable inhabitants of the Guinea coast, who give in exchange ivory, palm oil, cockatoos, gold dust, and diamonds. I scream violently. All at once the chest explodes. The nabob passes downward in a gust of fire, and I'm thrown into the sea under the wreck. A shout of demoniacal laughter comes from the parting vessel, and I hear a shrill cry of—

"Here's your shaving water, if you please, sir, and quite hot!"

It has been a dream—a moment's reverie. Green's enormous Indiaman has still to be rescued, and I have got to shave myself.

To shave is the work of a moment. I put on my hat and hurry to the beach. It has ceased to rain, the wind has gone down, the haze is lifting; the blue sky, already large enough to clothe a moderate sized Dutchman, is spreading out aloft. (I must be nautical. I can't somehow help it.)

I search the grey wall of sea everywhere for the nabob, or the Indiaman. No signs. I beat along the cloudy tawny surface of the troubled

ocean, lathery with froth; but no effects. At last I ask a group of fishermen smoking stolidly, in a sort of glum parliament, under the black side of a small lugger, drawn up on the beach.

"Have you, my good men, seen anything of this large Indiaman that they say is likely to be driven on shore?"

The men look at me with horny eyes. They make no reply. One ruffian thrusts his tongue into his hideous cheek. The rascals shake their heads, and, as I move on, a disgustingly impertinent boy feeding a donkey by a cabstand couches his forehead with assumed idiocy, and, looking steadily out at sea, dances a double shuffle on the shingle, thrusts his hands in his pockets, and sings something about "Not for Joe." Who's Joe? Then all the other smugglers and villains laugh boisterously, and one lubberly villain, lying flat on the shingle, pretends to swim violently on shore.

I walk away disgusted at the degradation of our lower orders, and sneer mentally at universal or any other sort of suffrage. As I enter the town by Jones-street, I meet the deceiver of the morning in high spirits. He is sold out—nothing left in his baskets, but a smear of red, and half a dozen silver spangles. I stop him and interrogate him bluntly.

"Well, sir," he says, "I confess it was a bit of a stretcher; but there *was* a Green's Indiaman me and my mates spoke in the night, and, Lor' bless you, the Lonnon gents here do like them yarns about the dangers of the seas, and so we fatten them up with 'em—we make a point of it—and besides (here he winked slowly at me with his blind and leaden eye), don't ye see, *it helps to sell the fish.*"

So passed away my morning's dream at Herringtown; so, too, have passed away many dreams that have lasted men their whole lives.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XVII.

HERE are some of this fry who do not scruple to inhale the scent of the gambling flowers, to walk on the gambling walks, to sit down, as I see they do now, on the gambling seats. A benevolent father, according to the stage phrase, portly, puffed, and placid, enjoying these scandalous blessings, as he sits between his two children, he is, no doubt, quite satisfied with himself and them. "It is really very pleasant, all this sort of thing, and the people here do it very nicely, very nicely indeed—so much good seems to be done." How I remember them—those nice girls, for one of whom I put down her money. It gave me a thrill to see her, for no doubt, good as she was, she had led me into this fatal fit. I turned back to avoid them, but they rose and followed me.

"Come here, Mr. Austen, we want to speak to you," said the portly father.

The young girl, Constance, was beside me.

"O, we have been looking for you everywhere, and, indeed, we were so sorry to hear that you have been unfortunate."

This was free and easy. She would have called the mislaying of her gloves a misfortune.

"Has it been so talked about?" I answered, bitterly; "I thought that losing was the ordinary condition of things here. It is no nine days' wonder, I presume?"

"No, indeed," she said gently; "but we were looking on, and then we heard from Mr. D'Eyncourt——"

"O, he talks of me, does he? What right has he to concern himself with my affairs? He is not my friend—as it is, he has meddled too much already, and I am not going to put up with it, even in this place, where so much can be put up with."

"Then it *is* true?" she said, looking at me with alarm; "and I reproach myself bitterly, as it was my foolish eagerness that led you on to it."

I did not know what answer to make to her. But her father came up and said,

"Come, Mr. Austen, we are English in a foreign land, and that should draw us together and make us excuse each other. I may be as free surely to you as I would wish you to be to me. Go, dear, and walk a little, I want to ask our friend something."

"I have no secrets. I should not care if the whole *collection* in this——" I was beginning excitedly when he stopped me.

"Now, let us talk sensibly; first of all, don't imagine any offence is meant to you; and, secondly, don't fancy that I am to be offended. I am a plain, straightforward, English gentleman, and like my own way when I have anything in my head. We have a lord whom all our country bench is in terror of, but I don't care a button on that frock coat for him."

"And how do these private matters of yours concern me?" I asked.

"Just listen; I don't know what you may have lost, whether little or much, that is no affair of ours, nor of the mob gathered here; but really there is something so strange in your appearance, something so full of despair, that every good person must be distressed by it."

"They have surely no business with me, or with my looks——"

"I am really afraid, even as a mere stranger, lest your health, or worse, your

mind, be affected; such wildness in your eyes, I would caution you to take care. Now, do listen to me," he added earnestly; "the truth is, we all noticed and watched you from the beginning, that is my girls and I; they thought you were something like a poor brother of theirs, though I don't see it. Then that dean told us something about you and that pretty creature you have at home, and the sickness and the going away, and all that. So you see we read it like a story book."

I was getting tired of all this, and answered, I confess, rather rudely. "Every one thinks themselves entitled to meddle with my affairs."

"Now," he went on, "let us look at this like two Englishmen. I tell you this will be a bad business. My girls and I, we know this place by heart, and the people, and the diseases, for we have been coming here many years. I tell you that the only course for you is to leave, and leave with us, this very day, by the four o'clock train. We shall take care of you; the girls will talk to you, will keep your mind from thinking. We shall rob you from your own home for three or four days at the least, and send you back to that dear girl of yours a different being from what you are now."

"And then," I said, "do you know what is to follow—can you guess what that home will become when its master returns?"

"Well, as to that, also, I wish to speak to you. If your money loss has not been very considerable, I should be glad to help you to replace it."

I was touched with his generosity—these were no mean platitudes; but all this only added to my degradation. A mere stranger, like one who has seen some squalid beggar in the street, and is, of course, privileged to ask the story, the minute details, and then in return, offers his coppers. Thank God, I have not fallen quite so low as that!

I declined civilly and coldly. I was in no such violent hurry to go, neither was I quite so weak as he imagined. I could fortunately control myself, I said, in presence of the danger, and more fortunate still, had no money to throw away. I made him a bow, and went away. He had not found me so easy to settle, as he had once done the county lord on the magistrates' bench.

Yet my heart turned towards his daughters and their gentle invitation, and I thought again and again wistfully of the tempting programme he had laid out. The horrid monotony of the day, dragging on, and dragging me with it, was something terrible to return to. It seemed endless; and the wearing equilibrium and suspense of another day was something to shrink from. I wanted to rush away into the world—anywhere; but my gold, my gold, kept crying to me from its prison. I might as well have just dropped a hundred gold pieces in the street, and have tried to pass on without picking them up.

And yet I felt it was the only thing, the only salvation. The wild, horrid dream or nightmare in which I was writhing and groaning must be broken through, if I could but awaken in the pure, innocent air.

There was their gambling music coming dulled through the trees; it made me shiver again. I could see the colours glittering among the leaves in the old sickening promenade; there is a devil in every one of these objects—band, fiddlers, players, all combined to drive me frantic.

I heard a gentle voice beside me. "Why will you not do," said she—it was Constance alone—"why will you not do as papa says? Indeed you look ill, and so feverish and excited. Do be advised by me. I have had my little losses recollect, and under your guidance; so I have a claim on you, and—you will come with us I know?"

"And leave my money to these swindling scoundrels—make them a present of it? I can't, I won't; you don't know, or can't know. I can't go—I dare not stay. O was there ever such a pitiable condition?"

"Yes," she said, softly, "many thousand times worse—you might be a thousand times worse. You should do as papa says. Once out of these dense clouds everything will seem bright, and natural, and rational. Do come, we will be so pleasant."

Again the satanic music came muffled through the trees, and made every fibre in my frame jar—sent a panic into my very brain, called up the whole hateful scene again. I saw the conspirators stripping victims, with the dull wearing monotony going on like eternal punishment. I could not stand *more of that.*

"Oh, let me go!" I said, I fear very wildly. "Oh, let me go with you—do, I conjure you!—anywhere! Let me go away out of this; if I stay it will kill me!"

She said they would call for me at half-past three. I walked home rapidly. Yes, it was assuredly all for the best. The moment that firm resolution was taken, it was

amazing how the clouds began to break. Yes, I would do as she said. The end was certain. But there was a reprieve of a week, at the least. Heaven might then send grace, or a remedy. Can those wise men, who are always preaching, or *canting*, in books, about waiting and putting your trust in something beyond this world, or who tell us that the darkest hour is the one before day—can they be inventing? Surely not. They must have known some instances. Who can tell or guess at the depths of arrogance and self-sufficiency? and the taste for instructing your inferiors may have blinded them to truth itself. However, it is a reprieve. The mere perverse eccentricity of human events may work out a remedy, just as it so often works out a disease. We hear of people *struggling* with adversity which is checking them at every turn. Why are there none whom *prosperity* treats in the same way? Simply because Satan is abroad, walking the earth, and delights in that game. . . . How strange are these theories of mine—with a certain acuteness; but all *that* is gone now. What a wreck and waste of abilities! I may say that now, speaking of myself as of another, and as any one turning over these pages in a century hence may remark. It will have all *ended somehow* long before that. . . . Those were good charming girls, but they are part of the luxuries of life. I suppose that one —Constance—has gone home to say *she* persuaded me—a pardonable and girlish vanity for which I do not blame her. It was *I* who, in reality, suggested the train of thought. She did not know what I was thinking of and dreading—that lonely journey home, the deadly imprisonment in the railway carriage. It was a welcome deliverance, that resource. . . .

Two o'clock.—I feel so much more tranquil now. So much rest—a sort of unnatural calmness, and the waves seem to have gone down about me. A little exertion and force of will has done this. It is surprising how much *that* is under control, even under the most desperate circumstances. I could tell some of these despairing gamesters, who think they are utterly wretched—that nothing is left for them—that Fate is capricious; that, when they have left fifty miles of country between them and this place, the thing will assume quite another aspect, the loss will dwindle down into a misfortune that *may*, by some agency, unknown but still possible, be repaired. If people could only be brought to look at things rationally, calmly, as I do now, how the flame colour would fade out, how the angles and rough edges would be smoothed away! Yes, I feel quite tranquil now, prepared for the worst; but still, not without hope. Here do I now repeat Dora's little prayer, which comes appropriately for one starting on a journey like me:

"*O Lord! Thou who dost guide the ship over the waters, and dost bring safe to its journey's end the fiery train, look down on me in this distant land. Save me from harm of soul or body; give me back health and strength, that I may serve Thee more faithfully, and be able to bring others dependent on me to serve Thee also, and add to Thy glories! Amen.*"

Six o'clock.—When I said that prayer first, I little thought—no matter now. Everything is packed. Let me go! Heaven forgive those who sent me here to reap this crop of wretchedness! What have I done to deserve this? There is the cab. . . . I met them at the station, and fortunately escaped falling in with Grainger; of course it will be said that I feared him. That would be a falsehood that I would cram down the throat of any man who said it. The false world has but one way of reading everything. *If* you are delicate and considerate, you are *afraid*. I wished to have peace, to get away in quiet, I did on my soul, even though there might be demons dressed up in the livery of guards and porters. The two girls and their father were there. He had his hand out, as it were patronising a school boy who had behaved well.

"Well done," he said, "I admire you for this. My Constance is never to be resisted when she has set her mind on a thing."

The world again—it assumes everything to be *its* work. Something happens after something that *it* did. Ergo, it was the cause.

"We have a nice carriage," he went on, "and we shall so enjoy ourselves. I declare I am quite in spirits again. Even now I am sure you think it a trifle—what's a hundred or two to happiness—to English home and beauty—you'll work it off in a few months. Strong hands, sir, and strong hearts do everything."

Work it off in a few months! That was his friendly scheme. Had all his generosity melted away into *that*—not that I cared—or that I would not have taken up his money,

had he laid it down on the seat, and flung it back to him. It is easy to preach, and tell the galled jade *not* to wince. I made no such reply as *that* to him—for in truth I had some sense as of being released. Indeed, I thanked him for his kindness. It is only *now* that I see what he was at. Then he said, wringing my hand, "I think so much of you for this. You are a fine character, Mr. Austen!" There was a letter of hers—Dora's, which I had not yet read, nor had I time to read. A harassed, persecuted man has enough to occupy his baited soul, without being brought to an account for having lost a second—a breach of affectionate duty, and all that. I suppose the characters are not written in invisible ink and will not fly away. If I loved a friend to distraction I would say to them all the same, "For God's sake, don't whine!"

"I had such a dream about you last night, darling—such a frightful *real* dream! With all that money in your keeping, and belonging to another, and with the temptations of that frightful place! Oh, come back—come back to us at once! And, oh! if you feel the least temptation—and, dearest, it is *no harm* if you do—at that moment fly—leave everything behind rather than incur the danger. Then, too, you may be thinking of us, and of what is to meet you at home. That is dismal enough, I feel; but an honest stainless heart will bear us through all. Mr. Bernard, besides, has the same idea; and he really frightened me yesterday, for you know what an inflexible man he is, and he prides himself on it. Here were his words, which I thought I ought to repeat for you: 'I am sorry I put such a temptation in his way now. Had I thought he would have taken to lecturing, he should never have had it. But I warn you, Mrs. Austen, if there is anything wrong, I shan't spare him. I shall make no distinction between him and a poor man; and he would be ten times as guilty.' I told him, with scorn, that he did not know you, nor know me, and that his suspicion dishonoured us both. He said that any tampering with money would be a greater dishonour, and went away a little displeased."

Anything wrong! A fine way of pleasing the man—instead of soothing him, when, God knows, I want all indulgence and mercy, to go inflaming him against me with defiant speeches. Always the way—no help even at home; enemies there! And such folly! Suppose I *did* want the money?

"I thought I would even rush to the telegraph office, and let you know at once. The whole so frightened me, and seemed—forgive me, dearest—so natural and probable. No crime indeed for you—what so many good people have done and repented of."

Run to the telegraph office! They seem to have money enough to think of such freaks and extravagances, while I am hunted and harried down to the very wall here, and the only relief I get is to be lectured; lectured by every fool that walks the right way.

O why did I not go with them? Who is now the greatest fool that walks the highway—the greatest malefactor in this den of malefactors? No; but these girls would go on with their foolish chatting and curiosity on the platform, instead of taking their seats. Or did they do it on purpose? All had been well! But the demons must pursue me here: or were they *his* agents? That father, with his platitudes, must go walking up and down, until that captain comes up eagerly.

"All but late," he cried out joyfully; "but it had been no harm if I was."

"Well, I warned you, my dear boy."

"So you did, but luckily I did not mind. Feel that coat-pocket, and that—literally bursting. I crammed them all in, notes, silver, gold, everything, anyhow."

My heart began to beat. The old infernal music was striking up, the black imps clanging their cymbals. The girls came to him. I saw the light in their eyes.

"Why you had lost everything, Captain Conway?"

"Five hundred pounds, as I have a commission, which should have been sold next month to meet expenses. In fact, the letter has gone to the agents. But I'll stop 'em by telegraph at Frankfort. Just passing that infernal Cure house—or, I beg its pardon, what *was* that infernal place?—in my cab. Portmanteau on the seat opposite. Something—I don't know what it was—prompted me to stop. I rushed in. Something—I don't know what, but I never did it before—made me ask the croupier, 'Zero been up lately?' 'Not for a half-hour,' he said. Something else—God knows what—made me give him a couple of double fredericks. 'Put that on,' I said. 'Look sharp, too.' On it went. Click, flop; and, by Jove, you should have seen the

bundle of gold and notes that came to me!"

My chest was heaving, my eyes, I suppose, growing wild. There was the persecuting perverseness! Why should I have to listen to all this? Just to torture me. Could they not let me leave in peace?

"Come," said one of the girls, "and look at this great engine, the one that is to take us. Do explain it to me."

Here was folly at full growth. I could not be left in peace to listen to a dramatic story like this—was it not what I always proclaimed! Let any one look back on these pages and find the proof there. But I was argued out of it, hectored, lectured by *complacently pious* people.

I heard him going on.

"I took out twenty napoleons and piled them thickly about the lucky Zero, on the square, on the corners, faith, in any way that they would fit at all. Plastered all well down. Round it went again—click, I declare if it wasn't Zero again!"

My foot went down on the asphalte with a stamp of agony. "I knew it;" I cried! "there are instincts in these things, and they are the fools who shut their eyes and ears."

"I don't know about that," he said; "but Zero is the boy, and I have always said it. He sticks to you if you stick to him."

"It is notorious," I said; "but it is cruel, scandalous. No one here can be let alone—persecuted — worried. It is others who cause all the ruin, not you."

"Not me," he repeated, looking at me with surprise, "of course not. I declare they took a couple of minutes counting and paying me. I suppose I have all my own back, and about two hundred and fifty profit. Then I thought I would try again, but time was up, so I came off."

The father smiled. The good are always indulgent to success. He didn't smile at me when I was miserable.

"Well, all's well that ends well. I am glad you saved yourself."

"I wish I had stayed now," said the captain. "I could have come on by a late train. They said it was all going on the low numbers."

"There now," I said, hurriedly. "Yes there would be a run of high ones, with a tendency to *get back* to the low ones, which would bring up Zero again. It is certain—morally certain. I have seen it happen over and over again."

"Too often, my dear friend, I am afraid," said the smooth father, taking my arm. "There's the bell, and I am not sorry."

I shook myself free. "My luck, my old luck—the demoniac trap, just to get me away at the very moment I might be successful. Am I to be the only one robbed—every one to go off laughing and smiling, but me? It is the righteous dispensation the parsons preach."

"Oh, what folly, my friend, this is! I am ashamed of you."

"Then let there be one rule—let there be fairness, even in this villany. I won't be singled out for ruin, and despair, and death, and let every one else escape. I am not to be the only one robbed, while every one else gets their money——"

"*Take your seats, gentlemen! Mount!*"

"My dear Austen, you promised me," said he, "you know you did."

I remembered my politeness. Thank Heaven, it cannot be said I was so much the slave of my persecutions as to forget my self-control.

"I shall be very glad to join you at Frankfort by the next train. I have indeed been so hurried, I have forgotten a dozen things."

"A wretched excuse," he said—"quite transparent—that can impose on no one."

The guard was at the next carriage, "banging" his way down.

"*Mount, gentlemen—mount!*"

Was it some providence was calling to me? "Mount—mount, for your life!" But I answered, fiercely, "Do you wish to insult me? You think you can speak any way to one in my case. I would not travel with you now if I was insured to win a thousand pounds in gold. No; go your way, and let me go mine."

He did not answer, but, turning away, entered the carriage. They gave me a soft imploring look. Then the door was shut upon them.

"MOUNT, SIR! You are going?"

"I am *not* going," I said, coldly. Then the whistle shrieked. I thought it was the shriek of the despairing demon, baulked of his prey. O fool!

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER V. BECOMING INDISPENSABLE.

"MASTER will be glad to see you, miss, in the library, if you please."

"Very good, Wilson. Is Mr. Creswell alone?"

"Mr. Radford, the agent from Brocksopp, have been with him for the last half hour, miss: but he's on the point to go. I saw him getting on his gloves as I left the room."

"Very good; tell Mr. Creswell I will be with him at once."

The servant retired, closing the door behind her, and Marian was left alone with her mother. They were in what they had become accustomed to call "their own" sitting-room, with its bright chintz furniture and tasteful appointments, as Marian had described them in her letter to Walter. It was tolerably early morning, just after ten o'clock, and the sun lit up the garden and the grass plot, from which the slight frost had not yet disappeared, though the snowdrops and the crocuses were already showing their heads in the flower borders, while the ditch-banks of the neighbourhood were thick with promised crops of violets and primroses. Mrs. Ashurst, whose infirmities seemed greatly to have increased within the past six months, was sitting by the fire with her face turned towards the window, enjoying the brightness of the morning; but her back was turned to the door, and she had not caught the servant's message.

"What was that Martha said, my dear?" she asked. "My hearing's getting worse, I think. I miss almost everything that's said now."

"You had your back towards her, dear mother; and you were too pleasantly occupied looking at the bright weather outside, and thinking that we should soon be able to get you out for a turn up and down the long walk, in the sun. Martha came to say that Mr. Creswell wanted to see me in the library."

"Again, Marian? Why you were with him for hours—when was it—the day before yesterday."

"Yes, mother; you're quite right; I was there, helping him with his accounts. But there was some information which had to be supplied, before we could finish them. I suppose he has obtained that now, and we can go on with our work."

"You're a clever child, my dear," said the old lady, fondly stroking her daughter's shining hair.

"There's more use than cleverness in what I'm doing for Mr. Creswell, darling mother. Don't you remember how I used to make out the boarders' bills for poor papa, and the 'general running account' to be submitted half yearly to the governors? These are larger and more intricate matters, of course, dealing as they do with the amount and sources of Mr. Creswell's income; but I think I have mastered the method of dealing with them, and Mr. Creswell, I imagine, thinks so too."

"It must be a very large income, my dear, to keep up all this place, and——"

"Large! You have no conception of it, mother. I had no conception of it, nor of how it came in, and grew, and is for ever growing, until it was before me in black and white. Original funds, speculations, mortgages, investments in this and that, in ships and wharves and breweries, in foreign railroads and——Ah! good heavens, it's enough to turn one's brain to think of!"

And the girl pressed her forehead with her hands and stood motionless.

"Yes, my dear," said the old lady, stretching out her hand, and drawing her daughter gently towards her. "I've thought more than once, that this house with its surroundings was scarcely the best school for a young girl who had to face poverty, and battle for her livelihood. And, indeed, I'm far from thinking that, even so far as I'm concerned, was it wise that we should originally have come here, or that we should have stayed so long. I wish you would propose about Mrs. Swainson's lodgings again, Marian, for——"

"For Heaven's sake don't mention Mrs. Swainson's horrid lodgings again, mother. Are you tired of your visit here?"

"No, my dear, not in the least; I'm very happy, as happy as I ever expect to be again in this world, but I know there's such a thing as outstaying your welcome, and——"

"Who has been putting such ideas into your head? Not those horrible girls! They have nothing to do with the arrangements of the house, they—there, I always lose my head when I think or speak of them!"

"You do indeed, Marian; I cannot imagine how it is that you and Maud and Gertrude don't get on together. You always seem to blaze up like I don't know what, especially you and Maud! No, my dear, the young ladies have always hoped we should stay on, but that of course is impossible, and——"

"Perhaps not impossible, mother!"

"Why not, my dear? Do you think that?—oh no, thank you! I guess what you mean; I'm an old woman, I know, but I've still my faculties left, and I can see through a millstone as well as most people of my age, and though I'm not apt to be—I forget the word, but you know what I mean—I declare once for all I won't do it!"

"Won't do what, mother! I declare I have no notion what you mean."

"Oh yes you have, Marian. You heard what Dr. Osborne, whom I never could abide, but that's neither here nor there, suggested about my becoming Mrs. Caddy, or rather Mrs. Caddy's successor when she went. I'm sure you, who talk of having a spirit and a proper pride, ought to see that I couldn't do that! Your poor father wouldn't rest in his grave if he knew it! You remember he never would let me do anything with the boys' clothes, or hair brushes, or that, always would have a wardrobe woman, and now to think of my becoming a housekeeper——"

"But, mother, there! you shall not worry yourself with that idea any more, and still we won't think just yet of Mrs. Swainson's nasty lodging! Kiss me now, and let me go! I've been keeping Mr. Creswell waiting full ten minutes."

What change had come over Marian Ashurst to cause her to speak in this way to her mother, with flushed cheek, and kindling eye, and elated look? What hope was dawning over the deep of that black, blank, sunless future, which she had seen before her in all its miserable intensity, its unavoidable dead level gloom, when first she arrived on a visit at Wolgreaves? What was the vision which during all that period, but especially since Tom Creswell's death, had haunted her, waking and sleeping, in company and in solitude, had been ever present to her thoughts, and had wrung her heart and disturbed her mental peace more keenly even than the thought of poverty, the desire for wealth? Dare she do it? She could, she had but little doubt of that, but little doubt of Mr. Creswell's daily increasing dependence on her, and regard for her. There was no one else in the world now, in whom he seemed to take the slightest interest. He had been deeply grieved at his son's death, laid up for weeks afterwards, one would have thought that life for him had lost all its zest and flavour, but lately in going through his business details with Marian, he had referred to the dead lad almost calmly, and had spoken of him, almost as he used to speak of him in the days, when his brusquerie and bad style, and consequent unpopularity, were gall and wormwood to his father's heart. She was thoroughly and entirely essential to him. He had told her so. He had said plainly enough that with no one else, no paid hirelings, no clerk, however trustworthy or confidentially employed, could he have gone through the private accounts, which showed the sources of his revenue and its investment, and which had dropped into almost hopeless confusion and arrear; from which they were only rescued by her quick apprehension, clear business knowledge, and indefatigable industry. He sat by in mute wonder, as she seized upon each point as it was laid before her, and stopped him in the midst of his verbose and clumsy explanation, to show how clearly she comprehended him, and how lightly she undertook the unravelment of matters

which seemed to him almost hopeless in their chaotic disarrangement.

What a wonderful girl she was, Mr. Creswell thought, as he looked at her poring over the items of account as he read them out to her, and marked the sudden manner in which her cheek flushed, and her bosom heaved, and her eye dilated, while that ready pen never ceased in its noiseless course over the paper. How thoroughly natural to be able to throw herself so entirely into the work before her, to take evident interest in what would be to others the driest detail, mere husk and draff of soulless business! He knew nothing of Marian Ashurst, less than nothing. That dry detail, and those soulless figures were to her more interesting than the finest fiction, the most soul-stirring poetry. For they meant something much better than fiction; they meant fact—wealth, position, everything. She remembered, even as she jotted down from Mr. Creswell's loose memoranda or vague recollections of sums invested here or securities lying there, or interest payable at such and such dates—she remembered how, as a child, she had read of Sinbad's visit to the Valley of Diamonds, and how, in one of the few novels she had come across in later life, she had been breathlessly interested in the account of the treasure in Monte Christo's grotto. Those delights were fictional, but the wealth recorded in her own handwriting before her own eyes was real—real, and, if she mistook not, if the golden dreams had not warped her intellect and dazzled her brain, enjoyable by her. Thoroughly enjoyable, not as a miserable dependant permitted to bask in the rays of prosperity, but as the originator of the prosperity itself, the mistress of the fortune—the——. No wonder her cheek flushed; she felt her brain throb and her head whirl; the magnitude of the stakes, the chances of success appalled her. She had never realised them before, and while they were beginning to dawn on her, the desperate effect of her proposed end upon one who had hitherto been loved by her she had steadfastly contrived to ignore.

If she dared to do it? Why should she not dare; what was it to dare after all? Was she to lose her chance in life, and such a chance, simply because as a girl she had agreed to a foolish contract, which, as it seemed, it was impossible could ever be fulfilled? Was her youth to be sacrificed to a preposterous engagement, which, if it was ratified at all, could only be ratified in grim middle age, when all power of enjoying life would have fled, even if the hope of anything to enjoy were then vouchsafed her? She knew well that people would be ready enough to bring accusations against her, but of what could they accuse her? Of selfishness? but it would not be merely for her own self-advancement, that she would take advantage of the opportunity that offered for bettering her position in life. Her mother was thoroughly dependent upon her, and the past few months had made a wonderful difference in her mother's physical condition. With plenty of comfort and attention, with a command of certain luxuries and the power of remaining perfectly quiescent, knowing that there was not the smallest occasion for mental disquietude, Mrs. Ashurst's life might last for some time, but the smallest mental worry would probably be fatal. This Dr. Osborne had said, and it behoved Marian to think of her mother before any one else in the world.

And yet—and yet? Was it all to be forgotten and stamped out, that one halcyon time of her existence, that one period in which she had ceased to think of the struggle for living, and to love life for being as it was? Was that one green oasis where she had rested so pleasantly, forgetful of the annoyances past, not caring for the dangers to come, as she lay beside the bubbling fountain of Hope, and drank of its pure waters, was that to be swallowed up in the world's Simoom, and to vanish with every trace obliterated? Or was it but a mere mirage, unsubstantial and unreal? As she battled with herself she pressed her eyes tightly with her hands, and endeavoured to recall those scenes of her life. She would see her lover, modest, earnest, hopeful, delighted at his so-far success, sanguine as to that which was to come. She would remember the cheery manner in which he would meet her doubts, the calm self-reliance, never degenerating into bravado, with which he spoke of their future as perfected by his efforts. Reminiscences, looks, tones, each had their effect upon her. Then she would think of that future, even when painted as glowingly as in Walter's fervent expectation. And what was it? Genteel poverty, at its best. The coming together of two hearts in a cheap lodging, with a necessity for watching the outlay of every sixpence, and a short career of starved gentility as the crowning result of a long life of labour and waiting. And to give up all she had in prospect, all she had in command, she might

almost say, for this——Poor Walter, poor Walter, what would he do! All his whole life was bound up in her, in her his every thought centred. How would he—wait though! She was not so sure of what she was saying! Who was this—Lady Caroline Somebody, of whom he wrote so strongly? Two or three times he had mentioned her in his letters. Marian recollected having smiled at Walter's first description of this great lady, who, though he tried to disguise it, had evidently been struck with him; but now she seized on the idea with quite a different object in view. Suppose she should carry out what she had in her mind, it would be expedient for her to show to the world—to such portion of the world as chose to be inquisitive or indignant about her proceedings—that all shame, so far as breaking off the original engagement was concerned, did not rest with her, that Walter himself had not kept faith with—— She broke off the thread of her thought abruptly, she could not battle with herself, she knew how vain and ridiculous the accusation would be, how the object of it would shake it from him with scorn; but it had a certain semblance of truth and likelihood, and it would do to bring forward, in case any such defence were ever needed.

"Well, missy," said Mr. Creswell, looking up from the papers on which he was engaged, "you see I've been compelled to send for my assistant; I couldn't get on without her."

"Your assistant is only too glad to come when she finds she can be of use to you, sir. Has the pass-book come from the bank, and did you get those returns you asked for from the Wharfdale Company?"

"What a memory you have, child! I declare I had forgotten what had stopped our work the other morning. I remembered only that you would have gone on until you dropped, but for want of material. Yes, they are both here."

"I see! and the totals both approximate to the sums you mentioned. There will be no difficulty now in preparing the rough balance-sheet. Shall I begin that at once?"

"No, no, missy! that is too large an undertaking for you. I'll have that done down at the office. I'm only too thankful to you for the assistance you've rendered me in getting the items into order, and in checking matters which I could not possibly have submitted to an uninterested person, and which I'm—well, I'm afraid I must say it—too old to go into myself!"

"Since you praise me, I have a right to claim a reward, and I demand to be allowed to carry out my work to the end. I shall be proud of it, proud to think that, when next these accounts are gone through, you will be able to look at mine, and see that they do no discredit to your book-keeping pupil."

There was a slight change in Mr. Creswell's voice as he said, "My child, I don't suppose this task will occur again in my lifetime. It would have stood over well until my poor boy came of age, had it pleased God to spare him. I have only done it now from a renewal of the old stock-taking habit, a desire to see how my worldly affairs stood before——" But the voice broke, and the sentence was left unfinished.

"But surely, sir, it must be a source of pride, and of pleasure too, to you, being, as you have often pointed out to me, the architect of your own fortunes, to have this convincing proof of their stability, and your success?"

"Success! my dear child! pride! pleasure! Ah, missy, a man must have lived but a small life, if towards the end of it, he looks for pride and pleasure in the amount of his balance at his bankers, or for his success in having heaped up more money than his fellows!"

"No! not in that entirely, of course! but in having carried out the main idea of his life and——"

"The main idea of my life! that was in existence but a very little while, missy! The main idea of my life was to make my poor Bessy a good husband, and afterwards—when the boy was born—to leave him a good and honoured name. Both those hopes are extinguished now, Marian. The first went years ago, the last—you know when. And this," pointing with his pen to the bank book in front of him—"this has no power to fill their place."

Both were silent for some minutes, then Marian said, "You have shown me how silly I was to speak as I spoke just now."

"My child, you spoke as a child. As one who has never known—who, please God, never will know, the vanity of such resources as those in time of trouble."

"I spoke as one who has known sorrow, Mr. Creswell, but who also has known, and who never can too gratefully acknowledge, the kindness of friends who were willing and able to help her. I think, I am sure, it will be a source of satisfaction to you to remember that your position enabled you

to soften, very much to soften, the severity of the blow which so recently fell upon my mother and myself."

"There, indeed, you show me some use in what you are pleased to call my 'position.' It is long since I have experienced such gratification as in being enabled to show some neighbourly civility, to the wife and daughter of my old friend. Even if you had been personally very different to what you are, I should have been pleased to do it in remembrance of him; but your mother is the gentlest and the most amiable creature in the world, while as for you——"

He paused for an instant, and her heart beat high. Only for an instant; she resumed her normal respiration as he laid his hand softly on her head, and said: "If I had had a daughter, child, I could have wished her not one whit different from you." She was quite calm again, as she said: "I am so pleased to hear you say that, sir; for as you know, there are but few to give me that affection which you truly describe as being the only thing worth living for. And I am so glad that I have been able to be of use to you, and to have shown you, in a very poor way indeed, how grateful I am to you for all your kindness to us, before we leave you."

"Leave me, Marian? What are you talking of child?"

"The fact," she replied, with a sad smile —"the dire hard fact. We must go, sooner or later; and it is the best for me—for us, I mean—that now it should be sooner. We have remained here longer than we intended, many weeks longer, owing to—to circumstances; and we have been, oh, so happy! Now we must go, and it will be better for us to look the fact in the face, and settle down in Mrs. Swainson's lodgings, and begin our new life."

Mr. Creswell's face had grown very white, and his hands were plucking nervously at his chin. Suddenly a light seemed to break in upon him, and he said: "You won't go until you've finished the balance sheet? Promise me that."

"No," said Marian, looking him straight in the face, "I'll finish that—I promise you."

"Very good. Now leave me, my dear. This unexpected news has rather upset me. I must be alone for a little. Good-bye! God bless you!" And he bent, and for the first time in his life kissed her forehead. "You—you won't forget your promise?"

"You may depend on me," said Marian, as she left the room.

Outside the door, in the bay window where she had held her colloquy with Dr. Osborne on the night of Tom's death, were Maud and Gertrude, seated on the ottoman, one at work, the other reading. Neither of them spoke as Marian passed; but she thought she saw a significant look pass between them, and as she descended the stairs she heard them whispering, and caught Maud's words: "I shouldn't wonder if poor Tom was right about her, after all."

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. PLYMOUTH.

THE black voyager, perched upon the great hollow globe of gun-metal, that crowns the Beacon at the east end of the Breakwater, looks towards Plymouth and its lusty children, Stonehouse and Devonport. How different now from the time when Haydon took Wilkie to North Corner Dock to see the pigtailed foretopmen, lounging along, smoking their long pipes, cracking jokes at every one they met —men, women, or French prisoners, and jostling their way among the crowd of bearded Jews, salesmen, and soldiers! The crow is bewildered at the variety of roofs which offer him halting places. The Charles the Second citadel bastions invite him; the roof of the Victualling Yard is tempting; the wall of the Dockyard affords good views of Hamoaze. On the Mount Wise telegraph he could rest for a moment; the rope houses of Devonport, the gun wharf, the building slips, all need the observant bird's attention, were his flight not so straight and swift to the Land's End. He glances, however, with delighted eye over the Sound from Penlee Point to Drake's Island, from the Mewstone to the entrance of Catwater, from Stoke Point to the highest terrace of trees crowning the woods of Mount Edgecumbe.

In Henry the Second's time Plymouth is described as "a mene thing, an inhabitation of fishers," but was soon rich enough, in its dangerous conspicuousness, to be worth plundering; so down came the French upon it, like eagles on a fat lamb, in 1377, when Hugh Courtenay, Earl of Devon, drove them off and chased them back to their ships. In 1388 the Gauls were at it again, and burnt part of the town; and in 1400, and 1403 they also plundered it. The part they burned, local antiquarians say, is still called Briton (Breton) side; while Old Town-street represents the uninjured side of the quondam fishing village. The slow Saxon nature at last roused to a sense of danger and the necessity for more security, and in 1439 Henry the Sixth made Plymouth a corporation, and gave it the right to fortify itself. In 1512 the ramparts were still further increased. A gleam of light fell on the town, to which all English eyes turned, when, in 1471, Margaret of Anjou landed here; and in 1501 Catherine

of Arragon, with her cold Spanish pride, stepped on shore at Plymouth, on her way to meet her husband. An old house in Catte-street used to be shown as the one in which Painter, the mayor, welcomed her. Spenser mentions the Hoe as the spot, according to the fabulous British history, where Corineus, the companion of Brute of Troy, fought with Goemot, one of the stoutest of those giant aborigines, tall as lighthouses, who once prevailed here. Two giants, with clubs in their hands, were cut, ages ago, on the turf of the Hoe to celebrate this great duel, and the steps were, till recently, pointed out by which Corineus dragged down the lumbering body of his rival and flung it over the cliff into the sea.

The crow remembers that, from the Hoe, keen eyes first saw the great gilded and crimson sails of the Armada, towering against the horizon. There is a legend, that, some hours before this, Drake was pacing here in jewelled hat, ruff, cloak, and rapier, with other brave Devonshire captains. He was playing at bowls when news of the proud fleet's approach came, but he would not leave till the game was finished. "Let's play the last bowl," he said, "and then have a bowl at the Spaniards." Could men of such calm courage fail to give the Armada to fire and storm, to hungry reefs and greedy sands? No wonder that on the anniversary of that grand day it was the fashion for Devonshire bells to clash, and men to shout, maidens to wear posies, 'prentices to rejoice, and the mayor and corporation of Plymouth to flaunt their grandeur in scarlet, and to treat their visitors with cake and wine.

Sir Francis Drake appears in Plymouth legends as a magician. It is believed by the country people that when the Plymouth people wanted water, Sir Francis Drake called for his horse and rode straight to Dartmoor. There, among the granite blocks and the heathery valleys, he searched about for, and found, the clearest and fullest spring of Sheeps Tor. Instantly uttering some words of incantation, Sir Francis galloped back the thirty miles to Plymouth, without pulling bridle, the obedient stream racing after its master close at his horse's heels, and following him into the grateful and rejoicing town. The sober fact is, that Sir Francis obtained a prosaic act of parliament from good Queen Bess, and coaxed a score of proud private gentlemen to allow the stream to pass through their lands. When, at last, the water coursed into Plymouth, it was welcomed as if it had been a living sovereign, by the firing of cannon and by mayor and corporation in full scarlet.

Plymouth had some hard rubs in 1643, when, after the Cavaliers had taken Exeter, Prince Maurice levied an army of seven thousand stout-hearted western men, and joined Colonel John Digby, who, with three thousand Royalist foot and six hundred horse, had already taken Mount Stamford, which was within half a mile of the Sound, and commanded part of the river.

What was Plymouth then? Clarendon tells us it was a rich and populous corporation, and the greatest port in the west, next to Bristol. The castle stood strong towards the sea, with good platforms and ordnance, and a little more than musket-shot from the town rose a fort much stronger than the castle, both commanding the entrance into the harbour, then under command of Sir Jacob Ashley, and a garrison of not more than fifty men. These forts had guns and shot, but no provisions, the king having been afraid of alarming his enemies by making any preparations for war. Sir Jacob Ashley being recalled to the king's side, the mayor, aided by a parliamentary committee, who kept a sharp eye on him, held the castle and town, which was guarded with a small and irregular earthwork, while to Sir Alexander Carew, a Cornish gentleman of fortune, the fort and island were entrusted. And here one of those romantic episodes, so frequent in the civil war, mingles its intrigues and vicissitudes with the story of Plymouth. Carew, afraid for his Cornish estates, and seeing Cornwall and all Devonshire, but Plymouth, pass over to the king, began to propose secret terms to Sir John Berkley, the governor of Exeter. But Carew, too anxious for a pardon, under the king's own hand, delayed so long that he was betrayed by a servant, and the mayor instantly surprised him in his fort, and packed him off, a prisoner, by sea to London.

Clarendon paints very strongly the state of mutual distrust in Plymouth when Digby first sat down before the walls. If Carew, who had been so violent for the Puritan cause, had been false, who could hope to be unsuspected? But the trembling town was saved by the indiscretion of Prince Maurice who, on taking Exeter, marched to Dartmouth, which he surprised. He had lost the tide in the affairs of men when he returned to Plymouth. The parliament had sent five hundred resolute men and a staunch Scotch officer, who meant mischief, a perfect Dalgetty, ready to eat his own boots and everybody else's, and prepared for rat soup and nettle salad, rather than surrender. The Cavaliers made no way against Plymouth.

In 1644, the king appeared, in person, before the place, hoping to scare it into a sudden surrender; but the Governor Essex had put in the town Lord Roberts, a sour dogged man, who never knew when he was beaten. The king, tired of waiting for the surrender, left it to Sir Richard Grenville, who had sworn a soldier's oath to take the town before Christmas, and who had already so quarrelled with Lord Roberts, that every prisoner on either side was either hung or put to the sword.

Sir Richard drew off from the town, and retired to Ockington, which he barricaded with three regiments of old soldiers to keep the Parliament men from Plymouth, and then proposed, among other crazed schemes, to cut a trench for forty miles from Barnstaple to the sea, by which, like a true Bobadil, he offered to defend Cornwall and Devon from all the world. After that Grenville's vanity,

rapacity, and ambition, sent him all wrong; he denounced Goring, and ordered the people to rise en masse and beat him out of Cornwall if he dare enter. He refused to act under Lord Hopton, the king's general-in-chief in the west, and was finally committed to prison by the prince for his oppression, tyranny, and disobedience. A gate, the sole surviving relic of the old Plymouth fortification, was pulled down in 1863.

An old resident in Plymouth, has drawn a graphic picture of the town, about the year 1809, and the crow, refreshing his memory by this means, looks back and sees again the Plymouth of the past. Old admirals then paced the streets, pig-tailed sailors revelled in the grog-shops, old heroes perambulated the Hoe. It was the time of hard fighting and press-gangs, of courts-martial, and frequent stringing up at the yard-arm. Old Haydon, the shrewd, clever father of the artist, was a printer and bookseller then, in a large shop nearly opposite the end of Market-street, facing the awkward Guildhall. Haydon used to relate to favourite customers how, when a boy of seventeen, he had heard an old seaman describe the horrors of the storm of 1703. The man had seen Winstanley, when the sea was breaking over Drake's Island like a cascade, go off from the Barbican steps to the Eddystone lighthouse, of which he was the builder — but neither builder, nor the slightest fragment of the Pharos, were ever seen again after that night. Newsmongers and quidnuncs of all ranks frequented Haydon's shop. Old Captain Winne used to drop in, telescope under his arm, on his way to the Hoe or the Citadel. Winne had been with Lord Howe on the first of June, and used to relate exultingly how, when our line was complete, the admiral shouted, "Then up with the helm, in the name of God!" and dashed through the Frenchmen, felling seventy of the enemy in the Montagne alone with his sweeping broadsides. The Duke of Clarence, when stationed at Plymouth, fell in love with the fair sister of this Captain Winne. Then there was old Admiral Manly, who is said once, in a fog, to have kept up a long and steady fire at a cloud, that he mistook for a French ship. In Haydon's shop these veterans often met Admiral Vincent, a captain of 1747, who wrote a book on the non-existence of matter when he was between eighty and ninety years old; and brave one-armed Sir Michael Seymour, of the Amethyst. That huge man, General England, the lieutenant-governor, also sometimes dropped in. The Duke of York, by some supposed to be his brother, had christened him "Great Britain." Another habitué was Herbert, the banker, a thin old man, whom the townspeople had christened "Death," from the following story. Two tipsy sailors blundered one night into the banker's garden, in Frankfort-place; the shutters not being closed, one of them looked in at the window, and saw the pale, gaunt old man nodding alone over his parlour fire. He instantly called to his lingering messmate:

"Jack, Jack, heave a-head; if you never saw Death before, here he is."

And a fine Holbein picture of senile decay the story gives us.

The old resident remembers once, in this same war time, yachting near the French coast, knowing old "Billy Blue" (Admiral Cornwallis) was between him and Brest, with twenty or thirty line-of-battle ships. Presently he saw hull down the mast of a large vessel; then soon after rose up two vessels, one towing the other. The Thetis, of forty-four guns, had been captured by Sir Michael Seymour's vessel, the Amethyst, of thirty-six. It had been a butchering fight of an hour and a half. The Thetis had lost one hundred and thirty-five killed and one hundred and two wounded, out of a crew of three hundred seamen and one hundred soldiers; the Amethyst about seventy killed or wounded out of two hundred and twenty or two hundred and thirty. The old resident went on board, and saw the shambles still uncleared; the bulwarks were jagged with shot; the shot thrown by us into the Frenchman's hull had in several places knocked two ports into one. Ghastly wounded men lay on blood-soaked hammocks and coils of rope, moaning and shrieking; the red deck was strewn with dying men, cut rigging, and severed limbs. The cockpit was choked with wounded sailors; on one plank thirteen miserable wretches were dying with lock jaw. "We can do nothing for them," the surgeons said, with looks of pity. The guns were splashed with blood, the steps of the gangways dripped with gore, the planks were sodden and black with powder.

On another occasion the old resident visited the Northumberland, that had just driven on shore two French frigates and a brig, and had had a brush with the Brest batteries. One French gun had killed six or eight of our men and wounded twenty-six. One shot beat out the brains of a seaman, killed a second man, and then passed nearly through the opposite side of the Northumberland. The ball was cut out, and hung in a netting in the ward-room, as a shot that had done its duty. Among the Northumberland's officers on this occasion was Stuart, who was afterwards master of the Susan when she was wrecked in Mount's Bay. A mounted methodist preacher rode into the waves and saved two men, but on the third attempt was swept away.

Another character of old Plymouth is remembered by the old resident. This was Captain Rotherham, one of the Smollet school of sailors, and the brave old tar who commanded the Royal Sovereign at Trafalgar, and would insist on wearing his enormous cocked-hat all through the battle, though it made him as conspicuous as the fatal diamond star did poor Nelson. Rotherham was a tall, wiry, mahogany-coloured veteran, who wore his cocked-hat square, and always carried a quid in his cheek.

There were Plymouth captains in these days, stiff-backed martinets, who considered Nelson

by no means a crack sailor. His ship was too slovenly for them, he did not flog enough. The story of the Barfleur is one of the old Plymouth traditions, and recals bitter days, when Tartar captains tortured their men to madness by small oppression. A new captain appointed to the Barfleur so tormented his men that they signed a round robin, and sent it to the Admiralty, who instantly forwarded it to the commander-in-chief at the port. The Tartar, holding the round robin in his hand, mustered the men.

"What have you got to say against me?" he said. "What complaint have you? Come, I command you to tell me."

Several of the men replied, "Nothing, sir;" but one honest fellow stood out and said, "If you want me to tell the truth, sir, I was once punished wrongfully under your orders—I was innocent of the charge."

The captain shouted at once, "Put that man in irons!" Four other sailors, indignant at this, stood out, and declared that they also had been unjustly punished. Two more were then put in irons, and a court-martial was appointed.

When the day came the irons were taken off the men, and officers and guards being appointed, proceeded the shortest way to the flag-ship. The sea was high and the boat upset at "the bridge," as it was called, a line of sunken rocks connecting Drake's Island with the mainland. A few men of the boat's crew were saved, and one prisoner. The president of the court-martial wished to postpone the trial, but the solitary prisoner claimed immediate justice, and was acquitted. The captain, savage as a wounded tiger, resolved to have his revenge. More brutal than ever, he now became thirsty for cruelty. He flogged a whole watch, because they did not secure the sails within an impossible time. At last, at Lisbon, a man more passionate than the rest, stabbed the wretch, but the point of the knife turned on a rib, the captain escaped, and the sailor was hung. With his dying breath the man declared, that he had willingly devoted himself to death, for the sake of his messmates. The captain died soon afterwards of apoplexy.

The Africaine was another unhappy ship. A mutinous spirit had broken out, and the men threatened to rise if Corbet, an arbitrary man they dreaded, was appointed. The port-admiral had determined, if a mutiny actually broke out, to lay a frigate on each side of the Africaine, and instantly sink her. This same Captain Corbet, who was afterwards killed off the Isle of France, once said at the admiral's table that the service would never be worth anything till captains could flog every one in the ship, even to the lieutenants.

"When that time comes," said good-natured Sir Edward Buller, "admirals will flog captains, and I'll give you your full share if ever you come under my hands."

Admiral Young, the port-admiral then, was a cold, formal, erect man, thin, grave, one hand always on the handle of his sword, the other hanging stiffly by his side. His costume was always the same—white kerseymere breeches, black top boots reaching to his knees, and squared hat. He was succeeded by Sir Robert Calder, a bluff, good humoured, stout man, who used to boast, that when nearly sixty years of age he had dived under a fifty-gun ship. His neglect in destroying the French after Trafalgar was attributed to his Scotch cautiousness. He had attacked twenty-seven Frenchmen with fifteen English vessels, and captured two, but he did not follow up the victory, because twelve or thirteen sail of the line were momentarily expected out of Corunna to join the enemy.

In 1809, the military hospital was full of the wreck of Sir John Moore's army, from Corunna. The soldiers, mere helpless skeletons, were to be seen supported to the hospital by the kind and hearty sailors. Most of the badly wounded had been left behind. When the French field pieces began to fire on our transports, they cut their cables and began to run, till our vessels reassured them by some sweeping broadsides on the French, who instantly fled.

The same year the survivors of the miserable Walcheren expedition arrived, to share the same hospital. Eleven thousand men had fallen ill out of a fine army of thirty thousand. Many fell sick after leaving the Scheldt. Gaunt spectres of men tottered between the rows of beds; others, still weaker, lounged on their beds, attenuated, pale, hovering between life and death. The medical staff had never heard of the local fever, and had not taken with them either bark or wine. Seven thousand brave men perished owing to this blunder.

There were at this time more than seven thousand miserable French prisoners in the depôts of Plymouth garrison. They were allowed to work (poor pining wretches) at Dartmoor, and sell the produce of their labour. Many who had no trade spent their time in gambling, and played away the very clothes off their backs. A set of these fellows, who were almost naked, were called "the Romans." They had gambled away even their bedding, and slept on the prison floor, huddled together for warmth. The story was that they used to turn sides at night, at the word of command—"Turn one, turn all." There is a tradition of the war time, how two poor Frenchmen, escaping from the San Rafael, swam to a lighter full of powder, overpowered the man on board, ran down through all the ships in Hamoaze, round Drake's Island, and so across the channel, and sold the powder in France for some hundreds of pounds. The old resident, remembers, too, how a prisoner on board the San Rafael imitated a two-pound note with Indian ink, and was sent to Exeter and tried for forgery. The defence was, that he was under the protection of no laws, and had therefore not broken any. He was acquitted.

The press-gangs were the great disgrace and terror of Plymouth in the war times. Our seamen were hunted down like wild beasts, without a chance of redress. Husbands, fathers, brothers, and lovers were torn suddenly from those

dear to them, and hurried away, often through the agency of secret enemies, into slavery. Was it any wonder such unwilling men became mutinous, and that captains had at last to trust for half their force to thieves, beggars, and the sweepings of cities? The old resident mentions an infamous case of a young carpenter who, during his dinner hour, strolling on the Barbican Pier, was seized by the crew of a man-of-war and carried off to the port-admiral's ship. The mayor, not having backed the press warrant, declared the proceeding unlawful. A town sergeant was sent to the ship, but was told no such man was on board. A marine, however, letting out the secret, the mayor persisted, sent the proper officers, and took the man away. It was a common evasion of the port-admiral's men to put their prisoner, ironed, into the boat alongside, and then to say there was no such person in the ship.

Haydon, the painter, mentions once seeing the greatest of all the celebrities of Plymouth streets in the old time: a little invalid man, with a green shade over his eye, and wearing a shabby well-worn cocked hat, and a buttoned-up undress coat. Haydon, quite a child, called out to his companion, "That's Nelson —take off your hat." Nelson, who was leaning on the arm of a taller man in a black coat and round hat, touched his hat to the boy, and smiled.

It was at Plymouth that good Dr. Trotter, backed by the influence of Lord Howe, succeeded, by regulations as to diet, and the use of lime-juice and fresh vegetables, in stopping the ravages of scurvy. "Ruptured in clambering up the sides of vessels," says the old resident, "his own health ruined, he was allowed to retire, after his inestimable services, on a paltry one hundred and eighty pounds per annum."

Two more traditions of Plymouth, and the crow starts again on his aërial tour. It is still remembered how the "Captain," a seventy-four gun ship, that had borne Nelson's flag, caught fire in Hamoaze. As it was impossible to approach near enough to scuttle the hull, and it was feared the ship would get loose and set others on fire, the launches came and fired heavy artillery at the blazing mass.

At that time sailors, on shore after a long cruise, used to indulge in the wildest follies. One mad fellow once hired twenty-four hackney coaches, and drove out with them in long procession after him. Admiral Penrose, once meeting one of his sailors quite drunk and waving two twenty-pound notes, seized one of the notes and put it in his pocket. In two days the man came on board drunk and penniless. When he was sober, the captain returned him the money.

"Aye, aye, your honour," he said, "I thought I'd money enough for a couple of days longer, but I couldn't tell what had become of it."

Northcote, the painter, was one of Plymouth's celebrities, and Haydon sketches him as a small, wizen, bald-headed man, with little shining eyes, and speaking broad Devonshire.

"Heestoricaul painter!" he said to the young enthusiast. "Why ye'll starve with a bundle of straw under yeer head." The late Sir Charles Eastlake was a Plymouth man, son of the solicitor to the Admiralty. Turner was fond of the neighbourhood of Plymouth. Mr. Cyrus Redding describes him at a pic-nic on Bur Island, watching the long, dark Bolt-head on a rough day His "Crossing the Brook" was taken from near New Bridge, on the Tamar. He said he had never seen so many natural beauties crowded into so small a compass. The inhabitants of Plymouth loaded him with attention. Prout, too, was another Plymouth man, and so was the poet Carrington, whose name has been graven on a granite altar on Dartmoor.

The crow, leaving the town, sails away seaward to the Eddystone, where, after Winstanley had perished, and Rudyard's lighthouse had been burnt, that sturdy Yorkshireman Smeaton raised the present unshakable structure. Following that great and sure guide, nature, he took the trunk of the oak as his model of fixed and stubborn strength, and the granite case of the building he dovetailed and grafted into the solid rock of the gneiss reef. Mr. Smiles describes very admirably how, after a rough and dangerous night, Smeaton used to ascend the Hoe, and look anxiously south-west over the wild waters for his lighthouse. "Sometimes in the dim grey of the morning, he had to wait long, until he could see a tall white pillar of spray shoot up into the air. Thank God, it was still safe. Then as the light grew he could discern his building, temporary house and all, standing firm amid the waters, and, thus far satisfied, he could proceed to his workshops, his mind relieved for the day."

The Plymouth Breakwater, which the crow chose as his point of vantage, has a story of its own, illustrating the energy and perseverance of the engineers of the present century. Earl St. Vincent proposed it, and Mr. Rennie, in 1806, was first to survey the Sound, and suggest a mole erected across the Panther, Tinker, Shovel, and St. Carlos reefs. He expected that it would require two million tons of stone for the mole's three arms, and an expenditure of about one million fifty-five thousand two hundred pounds. Various other plans were proposed, more or less impossible, more or less absurd. One hundred and forty wooden towers full of stones were to be sunk in a double line; there was to be an open-arched mole, like that at Tyre; there were to be one hundred and seventeen triangular floating frames and piers at different points. Mr. Rennie at last received his order, and set to work in 1811. Twenty-five acres of Creston limestone were purchased, and ten vessels and forty-five sloops prepared to bring the stone. The first stone was laid in 1812, and by March of the next year forty-three thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine tons of stone had been deposited. In March, 1814, it bravely resisted a storm, and saved a French vessel under its lee. In 1816 alone three hundred and thirty-two thousand four hundred

and seven tons of stone were deposited. In 1817, a storm displaced two hundred yards of the upper stone-work; but this only strengthened the work, and showed the "angle of repose" at which the stones could safely lie. Rennie died in 1821, and his son and three other engineers completed this noble work. Sir John Rennie, finding the roll of the sea dangerous at the westward end of the Breakwater, built a platform of rubble to "trip up" the heavy seas before they could reach the slope. In 1838, a severe storm carried blocks of twelve and fourteen tons from the sea to the land slope. The western arm was completed in 1840. The stone used has been computed, in the total, at three million tons; the total cost at one million five hundred thousand pounds. The Digue, at Cherbourg, is, however, four thousand one hundred and eleven feet long and ninety feet broad; the Breakwater at Plymouth only one thousand seven hundred and sixty feet long and one hundred and twenty feet broad at the base.

And now rising and soaring far over the proud woods of Mount Edgecumbe, which the admiral of the Armada is said to have selected for his prize when the Spaniards should divide England, the crow drifts on across the wild Cornish moors to Bodmin, en route for the Cornish coast and the haunted cliffs around Tintagel.

THE VINDICATION OF PROSE.

MODERN readers of our recent high-flown poets are too apt to despise honest every-day Prose, as an inferior form of composition. By such persons, we apprehend, the nature, origin, and importance of prose, as a vehicle of thought, have not been duly considered, nor its genius properly estimated. Poetry, we concede, is older than history, and verse than prose. The former, moreover, as if by right of primogeniture, have taken the highest rank in general regard. Is it not, however, doubtful whether their claim to such superiority can be maintained? A late eminent poet wrote a very brief but significant essay, on The Wonderfulness of Prose. As an instrument in the hands of a skilful worker, indeed, the utility of prose appears to have no limits; it is available for all subjects, the loftiest as well as the lowliest. It can accommodate itself to either. It has an endless capacity of adaptation. It can vary its rhythm at pleasure, now swelling into sublime eloquence, now condescending to the plainest narrative. It is never monotonous, because always free to suit its cadence to its theme, and to alter the measure with the mental mood; it imposes no form on the thought, but permits the natural expression to every rising emotion.

Now, verse for the most part does the contrary of all this. The metricist dances in fetters, and stands on ceremony and punctilio. Nor is he content to speak the truth in a straightforward manner, but wraps it in fable, and conceals it in myths. The Oriental type of mind is that which best illustrates this, and most aptly transmits to us the pre-historical in its most appropriate—its poetic form. In this there is a want of distinction between the inward feeling and the outward figure; and positive laws are readily accepted for, and instead of, the moral sentiments. Consciousness has not yet made any difference between the inward and outward, and language is left to the mercy of metaphors and allegories, which are not yet submitted to any control but that of grammar; which, with some other studies, such as astronomy, geometry, and algebra, receive early attention. Life and speech with a pre-historic people are ruled by the imagination, unassociated yet with understanding, the objects of which from their first apprehension are perverted by the fancy. Such a people lived in a state of reverie, and revelled in sensuous perceptions and expressions, which were traditionally accepted as identified with truth, and never brought to the bar of conscience or the test of reason. Accordingly, in conversation with Eastern people, we seldom get a veracious answer or any direct information; what appears to the European mind as falsehood pervades every sentence, even to the form of the words, owing to the mind being in a false state: but the seeming falsehood, though it may have the effect of a direct lie, is really a fiction only, prompted by the excitement which a habit of poetic expression continually maintains and indeed requires. Such is the case with the Hindoos to the present day.

Myths, for the most part, have as little place in prose as they ought to have in history. It states things as they actually happen, and not as they may be made to appear by a symbolical interpretation, based on arbitrary suppositions. We meet with this literal dealing with facts first of all in Chinese history. The Chinese writers of history form a distinct series, and commence with a high antiquity, some three thousand years before the Christian era. Their earliest books contain ancient canonical documents, and are called Kings, consisting of the Shu-King, the Y-King, and the Shi-king. The first of these comprises their history, treats of the government of the former monarchs, and gives the statutes enacted by them; the second consists of figures, which have served as the bases of the Chinese written character; and the third preserves a collection of the oldest poems, written in a great variety of styles. These, with two others of less importance, the Li-king and the Tshun-tsin, form the groundwork of the history, the manners, and the laws of China. The Chinese historical works are executed with the strictest accuracy; the historians belong to the highest functionaries. Two ministers, constantly in attendance on the emperor, keep a journal of everything the latter does, commands, and says, and their notes are then worked up and made use of by the historians.

The earliest of these histories, however, could not avoid the mythical element, and represents the human race as originally savages, living in

the woods, feeding on the fruits of the earth, and clothing themselves with the skins of wild beasts, until Fohi taught them to build huts and make dwellings. To the same hero is ascribed the origination of agriculture, commerce, marriage, and the doctrine that reason came from heaven. He is said also to have given instructions for rearing silkworms, building bridges, and making use of beasts of burden. From this point the history proceeds clearly enough, describing the extension of the culture thus initiated to the south, the commencement of a state and government, and the rise and fall of different dynasties.

Twenty-three centuries before the Christian era, it is evident from the prevailing testimony of historical documents, that there was no state. The same is the case with Asia up to the present time. Among the Chinese, indeed, the moral will of the emperor is the law; but in India generally the freedom of the subjective agent is altogether wanting. We have thus among the Hindoos a people, but no state. A principle of despotism, and the practice of tyranny, describe the common condition of affairs among Orientals. The monotony of such a condition affords no materials for history proper, and will not bear telling, in plain, unsophisticated prose. It requires fiction for its embellishment, and the march of numerous verse. As for the Hindoos, we are truly told by a German philosopher, they are by birth given over to an unyielding destiny, while their spirit revels in the ideal, so that they exhibit in their mental operations a contradictory process. There is, he adds, on the one hand a dissolution of fixed, rational, and definite conceptions in their ideality, and on the other a degradation of it by its identification with a multiformity of sensuous objects, whereby all that happens is dissipated in their minds into confused dreams. In a word, what we call historical truth and veracity—intelligent, thoughtful comprehension of events, and fidelity in their representation—nothing of this sort should be expected from them. The same writer seeks to explain this deficiency in their intellectual character, "partly from the excitement and debility of the nerves, which prevents the Hindoos from retaining an object in their minds, and firmly comprehending it, for in their mode of apprehension, a sensitive and imaginative temperament changes it into a feverish dream; partly from the fact that Veracity is the direct contrary to their nature. They even *lie*, knowingly and designedly, where misapprehension is out of the question."

The association of truth with prose is a great argument in its favour, as also its power of distinctly stating facts without reference to their dignity, and, if necessary, in all their littleness and meanness. There was an opinion at one time that even history could not condescend to these, but it has learned at length to care for small things, as well as for great; and even romance, which once wandered among the strange for the wild and wonderful, now finds in the familiar, sufficient material for the excitement of the marvellous in the reader. The simple flower at our feet is as surprising to a well-constituted mind as the star in the heavens. Prose can easily take cognisance of both. At the same time, it can equally, and with the same facility, deal with the most sublime truths of philosophy, and give definite expression to the most abstract propositions. It can treat both of details and principles, however minute in their forms, or extensive in their developments, and conduct both to a rational conclusion. How difficult it is to do this in verse, those who have attempted to write philosophical poems have fatally demonstrated. The Essay on Man would have been more suitably written in prose, and the errors in its argument would have been more readily detected. The metrical form casts about all its statements the same degree of splendour, whether false or true, and we fail to make the requisite distinctions in the equality of the brightness. Didactic poetry, in general, has suffered from the inapplicability of verse to its specific subjects; and of late no skilful writer has ventured into the troubled arena, preferring the pleasant and peaceful paths which abound in the domain of simple, unsophisticated, and uncompromising prose.

We learn the most of India through Greek history, which was written in prose. But it is the empire of Persia that first connects itself with history after the Chinese. In Persian history we recognise a development of intelligence in its human form, and under conditions which best suit those of prosaic composition. Light has been worked from the darkness, and manifested itself in the consciousness of man. To this fact the doctrines of Zoroaster have express reference. His books were written in prose in the Zend language, a language which is connected with the Sanscrit, and was spoken by the Persians, Medes, and Bactrians. The light which they recognise is not without its opposite; and an antithesis is stated, but as proceeding from one and the same universal being, or unlimited All, which is named Zeruane-Akerene, wherein the dualism originates. We are not yet sufficiently acquainted with these books, and depend too much on tradition. Ctesias, a Greek historian, had, it is stated, direct access to the archives of the Persian kings. A few fragments, however, only remain. Herodotus and Xenophon give us abundant information, as do also the later Hebrew writers. The former mentions many facts respecting the Babylonians and the Medes, and the Assyrian-Babylonian empire; also respecting the Chaldeans, a later people; while from the Jews, who were carried captive to Babylon, we have reliable accounts of the organisation appointed for the government business, of the extent of its commerce, and of the depravity of its manners. Grecian art and poetry had early penetrated Lydia, to which the Greek colonies on the border of the western coast of Asia Minor were subject, as they were also to Persia. Ultimately Persia becomes an empire in the modern sense—consisting of a number of dependent states, yet retaining their individu-

ality, their manners, and laws. In religion they were intolerant; for we are told by Herodotus that the Persians had no idols, indeed, ridiculed anthropomorphic representations of Deity, and were as fierce as the Jews themselves against the practice of idolatry, destroying the Greek temples, and breaking in pieces the images of the gods.

For our acquaintance with these particulars we are indebted to prose history, and prose philosophy. Nor are we deserted, if we seek information on the progress of the culture so cautiously and gradually introduced and promoted. We might thus tell, how the Syrians proceeded to develop the possibilities of written language; how the Phœnicians discovered and first navigated the Atlantic Ocean, and had settlements in Cyprus and Crete, and worked gold mines in the remote islands of Thasos, and silver mines in the south and south-west of Spain; how in Africa they founded the colonies of Utica and Carthage; how from Gades they sailed far down the African coast; and how from Britain they brought tin, and from the Baltic, Prussian amber; all showing that industry had taken the place of inactivity and rude valour. By it nature was subjected to the profit of man, and the nations were delivered from her fear and the slavish bondage that she had previously been permitted to inflict. From this point we rise to the pure Theism, which distinguishes the religion of Judæa, and which subordinates all beneath it to the mere prose conditions of historical life, and permits not to natural objects any theological element whatever.

The recognition of the spiritual in nature is yet allowed to poetry; but it is alien to the genius of prose. Prose assigns to every thing that is limited and circumscribed its proper place, and insists on its finite existence. It points out the distinction between the unknowable and the known, and will no longer suffer the confusion between them, which vitiated so much controversial writing of the last and previous centuries. If prose had done no more than this, it has rendered a service which entitles it to the highest honour, as being of the greatest utility, and one the merit of which belongs exclusively to itself.

A GARLAND OF LYRICS.

OUTSIDE AND IN.

QUIETLY browse the meek-eyed cattle,
Quietly nibble the timid sheep,
And the wind among the beechen branches
Seems as 'twould cradle the rooks to sleep.
The smoke curls blue from the kitchen chimney,
The manor house shines white in the sun;
Peace dwelleth here, and the evening glory
Of a life—well ending—well begun!

Thou foolish poet! Pass the threshold!
The master sits in his old arm-chair,
And two strong keepers watch beside him,
Lest he should slay them unaware.
He raves, he whines, he groans, he whimpers;
His wife and children have fled, forlorn;
And could he know the doom he suffers,
He'd curse the day that he was born.

BEAUTY AND GRIEF.

There's something beautiful in sadness,
A something sad in all that's fair;
To trace, why this should be, is madness,
And leads the mind one knows not where.
Yet when we think on these affinities,
Beauty and grief become divinities.

THE DOUBLE BANKRUPTCY.

"You owe me full a thousand pounds."
"I owe, but cannot pay."
"Then you shall go to prison strong."
"Well—if I must—I may."

"Hold off your hand, hard-hearted wretch!
This man is not for thee!
His age is three score years and ten,
And he's in debt to *me!*

"He owes *you* money—*me* his life.
Come, aged friend!" he saith;
"Come to my quiet prison house,
Come to the peace of DEATH;

"This huckster acts from base revenge,
And I from love divine!"
The old man sighed and breathed his last,
"DEATH! only friend! I'm thine!"

THE LIVING MEN.

I see the true men of the day—
The great, the brave, heroic souls—
Not as they pass me in the way
Amid the common human shoals;
But with the eyes of future Time,
Their halos fixed, their wreaths entwined,
Sages, and wits, and bards sublime;
The benefactors of their kind.

THE BUSY WORKMEN.

"Each drop you drink's a workman true,"
Said Dorothy, to her lord.
"A workman? How?" said her angry spouse,
Scowling across the board.
"Yes," said the wife, "they're workmen sure,
And make your coffin strong;
They saw the wood, they drive the nails,
They'll put you *in* ere long."

THE PLAGIARIST.

If I've a taper that I light
Where other tapers shine,
Am I a thief and plagiarist,
And is the light not mine?
And if my taper shed a ray
Much brighter than the first,
Is taper number one the best,
And number two the worst?

You say my thoughts in Homer lurk;—
Perhaps! But I'd be told,
Where honest Homer found his thoughts—
His new ones or his old?
The skylark sang in Homer's time;—
I hear it in the blue;
Did this day's lark rob Homer's lark?
Sweet critic, tell me true!

PEARLS BEFORE A HOG.

We passed the Chablis with the fish,
He drank and made no sign,
He was a man of mighty mark
That we had brought to dine.

We gave him Clicquot, dry and iced,
He sipped—not drained the glass;
And next we served Chateau Lafitte;—
He let the bottle pass.

What could be done with churl like this?
We tried the Clos Vougeot
And Corton Pierre, two royal drinks,
That cheer our world of woe.

He drank, and said, "These wines, no doubt,
Are pleasant in their kind,
But, to my taste, a pot of beer
Were worth them all combined."

TO THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

THE REPORTS OF A VOLUNTEER COMMISSIONER.

SIX IN NUMBER.

Report the Third.

All Music Halls are not as the Pandemonium. To the height of that glittering, well-conducted, audacious temple of "life" no other manager has yet attained. It is true that ballet finds a place on the smaller stages of many halls. Minette and her bold comrades have found imitators about town. Moll Flanders forms a large and important portion of the attraction at other establishments besides that in Foreigneering-square—notably at one in the immediate neighbourhood, which appears to be very conveniently placed for that lady—but nowhere else is she so obviously *the* attraction; nowhere else is her presence so clearly relied on, to draw the shillings of credulity and inexperience. There is elsewhere, as a rule, a larger element of respectability among the audience: the dancing performances elsewhere, though often daring enough, are scarcely up to the standard of Nudita and her like. How long this will last it is difficult to say. Probably an early change may be looked for. It is scarcely likely that enterprising managers, pondering over the success of the Pandemonium, and musing on twenty-five per cent dividend paid its fortunate shareholders—for the mighty power of Limited Liability sways the destinies of the Palace—should hold *their* hands. New halls, arranged on principles derived from experience, may be expected to rise in all directions. As matters stand at present, there seems no reason why every quarter of London should not have, each its own Pandemonium. Possibly your Lordship may think this matter worthy of somebody's attention.

At present Your Commissioner has nothing to report adverse to the general run of Music Halls. That they are more undisguisedly public-houses, plus singing and dancing, than was the case in their earlier days, is plain. When the Music Hall first sprang into existence, and when it began to take its place among the recognised popular places of recreation a better class of entertainment was presented on its boards than is now the rule. The proprietors were eager to advertise good music: the comic singer was kept to a discreet extent in the background. Circumstances have changed. If any attempt be now made to get through an operatic selection, or any piece of good music, it is felt by all concerned to be a mere pretence—an impediment to the enjoyment of the real pleasures of the evening. It is the trapeze performer, on whose behalf the roof is festooned with strong rigging, and for whom complicated arrangements of trestles and carpets have to be made, who is wanted; or, worse still, it is the comic singer.

This comic singer (or comique as he loves to call himself) is a remarkable product of the last few years. That people, not afflicted with any obvious form of mental disease, can calmly sit and listen to—nay even sometimes laugh at—the extraordinarily imbecile and senseless outpourings of the music hall comic muse, is, to one of Your Commissioner's way of thinking, quite amazing. The words of these comic songs are, as a rule, beneath contempt. The loves of barmaids, the exploits of Rollicking Rams and other unpleasant persons whose sole themes are the delights of drink, and the pleasures of reeling home with the milk, are the subjects chiefly treated of. Snobbery and vulgarity are rampant and blatant in these effusions. The devices resorted to by the singers to raise a laugh, are feeble and melancholy in the extreme. Preposterous coats of violent colours and startlingly braided; great hats, frequently of the brightest blue or green; long yellow whiskers of the Dundreary type; these are some of the dreary substitutes for humour that are offered to the public on the Music Hall stage. The comic singer of to-day is responsible for the education of a very terrific form of snob, or gent. The younger male frequenters of the Music Hall are distinguished by an insolence of manner and tone, faithfully copied from the manners of their favourite on the stage. Constant familiarity with the topics treated of in the Champagne Charley kind of song, must have a deteriorating effect, and the breed of the little snobs, now coming to be usually called after their distinguished prototype, is alarmingly on the increase.

All these comic singers sing the same kind of song, all wear the same sort of costume, all have the same sort of "business", and, except when a pretty tune crops up among them, from some old country-dance book, the airs to which

their words are set are all in the same vulgar, commonplace style. Half a dozen of these gentlemen will sing at the same hall, on the same night, each about half a dozen songs. Whether the audience want the singer again or no, matters not. Until he has got through the number of songs for which he is engaged, he must be encored, if by nobody else then by the chairman, and "the big Bounce will oblige again." Successful "comiques" will be engaged at two or three halls on the same night, and have to hurry from one to the other in an equipage, usually combining the taste of the late Mr. Thomas Sayers with the professional air of a veterinary surgeon, which the visitor may notice in waiting. There is nothing so remarkable in connection with this subject, as the dreadful uniformity that rules in all these places of entertainment. The same singers, the same acrobats, the same unvarying dull routine, everywhere. For the purposes of this Report, Your Commissioner has visited, he believes, every Music Hall in London; but, whether he was in the far west, where the scarlet jackets of long-legged life-guardsmen gave a pleasant warmth to the scene; or in the remote east, where there was a prevailing flavour of tar and docks all about the room, the entertainment was precisely the same. The little hall in the north is in no way to be distinguished from the larger one in the south. Dulness is the badge of all their tribe.

The comic singer has one redeeming point, which Your Commissioner thinks it fair to mention He is nearly always vulgar, not unfrequently coarse; but he is never indecent. If credit can be given him for nothing else, he may at least have the credit of invariably keeping within the bounds of propriety.

If Your Commissioner suffered much at the hands, or rather at the brazen throats, of these gentlemen; what is he to say concerning the tremendous performances of the serio-comic ladies? Champagne Charley is bad enough: Champagne Charlotte is intolerable. A foolish and vulgar song from a man's lips, is a sorry matter; but when the dreary business is done by a woman, it is most repulsive.

In these remarks Your Commissioner has treated of comic singers as a class, and an undiverting class; here and there an occasional exception may be found. Your Commissioner has, though rarely, met with a good comic singer; and there are some Music Hall performers, but not many—gentlemen as well as ladies — who are undoubtedly clever and able.

On the whole, except in the case of the comic singers, Your Commissioner finds little amiss at the Music Halls. Of course, if the public like the comic singers, and insist upon hearing them, the public must have its way. No one can suggest any legislative interference with mere nonsense. But the Pandemonium is so striking a warning of what a Music Hall may become, that Your Commissioner is very strongly of opinion that the Music Halls should be put under more efficient supervision than that of the licensing magistrates, and without loss of time.

Your Commissioner will now proceed to the consideration of the state of things, at those places of public entertainment over which your Lordship already has authority.

Report the Fourth.

It ought of course to have been well known to Your Commissioner, before he commenced his theatrical labours, that the dramatic art is at a low ebb, and rapidly decaying. It ought to have been known to him that there are no actors now-a-days, and no dramatic authors. It would have been becoming in him to have given up the whole thing as in a bad way. So much to this effect has been said and written, that indeed he had been almost brought to believe it against the evidence of his senses. But the reflection that at all periods of his life he had heard the same story; that the same complaint has been fashionable since the days of Plautus; prevented this charming belief from taking any strong hold upon his mind. With increasing years Your Commissioner had more than once caught himself depreciating the present generation; and had, with shame, found himself saying, on a comedian being praised for his performance in a certain play, "Ah! now Wright *could* play that part." With shame, for was it not a fact, that when the late Mr. Wright was still diverting the public, seniors in the audience used to make disparaging remarks to that gentleman's detriment, with reference to his predecessor, Mr. John Reeve? Furthermore, "You should have seen Munden, sir," and "There are no actors since John Kemble," are dogmas wearily familiar to most of us. Without violent optimism, Your Commissioner declines to depreciate the merits of the performers of to-day, by comparing them with those of a totally different time, and school of art and taste.

Similarly, however depressing the modern burlesque, a slight acquaintance with the literature of the stage is sufficient to assure the student, that dramatic doggerel and nonsense are not the exclusive possessions of this age. Our forefathers had a deal of rubbish served up to them. The heavy, stupid, unreal five-act comedies in fashion comparatively few years ago, and now happily forgotten, do not get the best of it in comparison with a few of the livelier works of to-day. Many of the dramas of the last few years are worth, in human life and interest, any number of the stilted, flat, sham-classical tragedies of early Drury Lane and Covent Garden.

Also, having been told on high authority that the morals of the stage are deteriorating, Your Commissioner perhaps ought to have accepted the statement as a fact. He preferred, however, to judge for himself.

With a notion that it was barely possible that some of the morbid self-depreciating tendencies of Englishmen—always particularly rife in stage matters, and always eagerly grasped at by the enemies of the theatre as weapons against it—might be at work in the present complaints; and yet with sincere anxiety to consider the question with thorough impartiality, the tour of the theatres was commenced by Your Commissioner.

Your Commissioner may say, once for all, that the ballet has always appeared to him to be a violent, gymnastic exercise, usually ungraceful, and almost always stupid; and it is his conviction that a large portion of the public are of his mind. For it will doubtless have been observed, when in the course of a drama and for no obvious reason, the ladies of the corps de ballet are introduced, their gambadoes are watched with scant interest by the audience, and the conclusion of their portion of the evening's entertainment is usually hailed with the feeblest applause. In the pantomime, and where it is allowed the first or chief place in the performance, the ballet may be more appreciated; owing to the varied combinations of colour and form, afforded by the ingenious grouping of a large corps de ballet, on an ample stage. Those ballets which consist chiefly of elaborate processions, marches, and the like, are invariably more popular than those relying on dancing alone.

The two theatres first on Your Commissioner's list, are both famous for their ballet effects: undoubtedly a rich, barbaric, and fantastic display in the one pantomime was better received than an elegant and prettily arranged dance in the other. The dance was of its kind good, and the principal dancer nimble and clever; but there can be little novelty in mere dancing feats, and the audience, although appreciative, were not enthusiastic. The costumes at both theatres were gorgeous in the extreme, but differed little, if at all, from those that the public eye has been content to gaze upon, without dismay, for many years. The costumes of a stage fairy, and of a pantomime prince or princess, are perfectly well known, and it cannot be said that in either of the cases now under treatment any very special divergence from established rules was noticeable; most certainly there was nothing to call for interference from without. Your Commissioner feels it, however, necessary to mention, that the personages who caused him the most satisfaction, and whose antics, highly relished by the audiences, were most ingenious and diverting, were certainly clothed but lightly. At the same time it is necessary to remark that both these personages were of the male sex; that one of them represented a benighted, though amusing savage, whose ideas of dress would naturally be limited; and that the other, whose most conspicuous article of dress was a pair of top boots, was a cat.

At both these theatres several points presented themselves strongly to Your Commissioner's notice. Two may here be mentioned beyond State control, and two on which your Lordship's opinion may fairly be asked.

Firstly, the public must by this time have had pretty nearly enough of the Girl of the Period. The present writer can speak strongly for himself on this point. The original papers written under this title were of a not particularly agreeable nature. The satire, however, if a little unfair, was at all events brisk, and the subject was not unsuited for satiric handling. Unfortunately, the name and subject have been seized upon by all the smaller wits, who have never ceased worrying them ever since. The town has been deluged with Girls of the Period. The lady has been served up in every form, musical, illustrative, theatrical; and with every kind of sauce, piquante and otherwise—chiefly otherwise. She has been flourished at the heads of unfortunate readers in every newspaper and magazine. She has be-

come an unmitigated nuisance. Fortunately she was followed by a caricature still more untrue and repulsive, in the shape of the Young Man of the Day; a caricature so repulsive, and so unlike the truth, that it proved to have no vitality whatever. The young man, it may be hoped, will now conduct his sister to oblivion. The Girl of the Period is produced at the two theatres in question, at a vast advertising expense, and with a magnificence remarkable to behold. Nothing comes of it but a gorgeous exhibition of impossible dresses.

In connexion with this point attention may be called to a most aggravating custom which appears, year by year, and more and more, to find favour with managers. Advertising is one of the theatrical nuisances of the time. The playbill is a mere advertisement, and the names of the performers have to be hunted out from a mass of glycerine, and rose water, and cosmetics. The pantomime reeks with advertisements. What does anybody care about the makers of the dresses of the Girls of the Period? Can it interest the public to know that Messrs. Want and Ask, or Knag and Rankle, are responsible for the paniers and fichus worn by those charmers? Suppose the eminent firm of Wheedler and Co. did supply the gloves, what then?

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that nothing is done even by the clowns at the establishments under notice, unconnected with advertising. The well-known boxes suggestive of droll surprises, are continually being carried in by tottering supers for advertising purposes. Harlequin wags his head, and flourishes his wand, but after the usual sounding slap on the canvas no laughter-moving trick ensues. The box opens, and the affair is found to be an advertisement pure and simple; a puff of somebody's sherry, or somebody else's mustard, or yet another person's coats. Whole scenes are arranged with this object alone; and the result is most distressingly dismal.

When the clowns are not engaged in calling attention to the different wares to be recommended, they are occupied with beating and maltreating policemen. And this brings Your Commissioner to points which he really thinks worthy of your Lordship's attention. From time immemorial a policeman has been the natural butt of the clown. He has been deceived, cajoled, punched, bonneted, in countless pantomimes. His miseries have been invariably received with delight. But, in the present season, this matter takes a wholesale form. The police force is held up to persistent ridicule, and claptrap appeals to the gallery against the police are made in every scene. The gratification with which these are received, stimulates the clown to fresh exertions, and the changes are persistently rung on the muzzle rules, on the hoop regulations, and on the supposed general incompetency of the force. The police have just now a difficult task to perform, and it would be just and politic to ensure them fair play. Your Commissioner is not desirous of emulating the colonel of marines at Plymouth, and is of opinion that no man or body of men is the worse for a little harmless "chaff." But in this case the chaff is not a little, nor is it harmless. It would possibly not be detrimental to the public interest if your Lordship were to consider the propriety of slightly abbreviating the present licence in this matter. It appears to Your Commissioner to be at least as important as the elongation of the skirts of the ballet.

Again, does the new Factory Act apply to theatres? If it do, how comes it that the stage swarms with "young persons and children" to an advanced period of the night? If it do not, does it not appear desirable that some effective supervision should be instituted over the work done by absolute babies, in pantomime? It appears a singular anomaly that the proprietor of a mill should not be allowed to employ children of a certain age at all; should be strictly under regulation as to the kind of work to be done by older children; and should be absolutely restricted to certain hours of work; if the manager of a theatre be allowed to do in this respect exactly as he likes. For little children to go through their share of the pantomime from two till five, and then again from eight till eleven, and this twice a week, seems hard work. Your Lordship may think the question worth consideration. The unhappy appearance and visible terror of some of the "young persons" grilling high up among the gas battens, in transformation scenes, may likewise not be lost upon your Lordship.

Only one pantomime remains to be considered to complete the list of that kind of entertainment at the West-end of the town. Burlesque has driven the pantomimists from all but three theatres in this quarter. This third pantomime offers but little for Your Commissioner's remark. A singularly active, and apparently boneless, gro-

tesque, executing strange and weird dances with excellent effect, was the chief feature in this entertainment. The Music Hall songs, the advertisements, the dances, the transformation scene, the maltreatment of Colonel Henderson's force, the Girl of the Period, and all the rest of it, were as per regulation.

Pantomime, at all events at the West-end, offered no special reason for your Lordship's animadversions. The dresses of the ladies of the companies, and of the ballets, appeared no scantier than they have ever been in Your Commissioner's recollection. There were plenty of ballets; for the matter of that there was plenty of dancing of all sorts; everybody danced; but there was nothing in any way offensive to any one not morbidly apprehensive of being shocked. With the exception of certain unsavoury business suggested by a recent notorious Old Bailey case, and indulged in more or less, as far as Your Commissioner's observations went, by every clown in London, there was nothing suggestive of coarseness. It was obvious that the causes of your Lordship's now famous circular must be sought for elsewhere.

SOFT SACKCLOTH AND ASHES.

When public attention has been recently directed to wonderful observances prevailing in religious houses—such as the wearing of penitential dusters on the head, and remorseful boots round the neck—one is naturally anxious for more information with regard to similar usages and customs; and so it comes about that a certain interest attaches even to the smallest indications which are allowed to appear, under Roman Catholic sanction, concerning the practice of the faithful at special times and seasons. Under these circumstances, some amount of curiosity is developed in ourselves, the heretical uninitiated, by even so small, and apparently inconsiderable, a thing, as a Cookery Manual for Days of Fasting and Abstinence. There are certain special shops (their number has rather increased of late years in London and its suburbs), in the windows of which are exposed various mystic wares, such as china receptacles for holy water, brazen candlesticks of mediæval design, candles elaborately decorated with colour and gilding to fit the above, statuettes of saints, miniature censers for amateur swinging, small prints representing what are called devotional subjects, rosaries, crucifixes, little wreaths of immortelles, and other kindred objects; it is in emporiums of this kind that the Manual may be easily met with.

Of course the first and most natural impression, with which one approaches such a work as the Manual, is a conviction that it will contain all sorts of ingenious recipes for rendering the food which it is necessary that those who are going to fast should partake of, in order to keep body and soul together, as unpalatable, and, in short, as nasty, as possible. The act of fasting, or abstaining, can rationally be engaged in with but one object, and that object the mortifying and punishing of the flesh, by depriving it of what gives it pleasure and gratification, and so checking that tendency to self-indulgence to which humanity is prone to yield. "It is possible to render this dish exceedingly unpalatable without impairing its nutritious efficacy, by the introduction of a small amount of gum of assafœtida;" or "by mixing a salad with cod-liver oil instead of ordinary salad oil, its nutritive qualities will be increased, while all gratification in swallowing such an amount of uncooked vegetable matter as it is desirable to consume for the sake of purifying the blood, will be completely avoided." Suggestions of this kind one might expect to find in a work, on the preparation of food intended for use on days set apart for special mortification, and punishment of the flesh.

But any simple student approaching the Manual with such ideas, will be a good deal surprised after due examination of its contents. Indeed one would be almost disposed to think, after a thoughtful perusal of its pages, that the object with which the work was originally compiled was that of dodging and evading the obligation of celebrating certain seasons by engaging in acts of self-denial during their course.

In plain English, then, this Cookery Manual for Days of Fasting and Abstinence, contains a number of recipes for rendering the food—the consumption of which is allowed by the church during penitential seasons, simply because the consumption of some food or other *must* be allowed—exceedingly palatable and delicious. The Manual publishes among its contents a list of twenty-three soups, twenty-seven "made dishes," twenty-one "modes of cooking eggs," twenty vegetable preparations, *thirty-four sauces*, and no fewer than forty-three sweet dishes and puddings. In all of these cases the attempt is made to render the article of consumption as nice as—keeping within the letter of the law—is possible: while in some cases the directions given for the composing of certain special dishes are so suggestive of a delicious result as positively to make the mouth water. There is a recipe, for instance, for "a vegetable soup," which really reads like something so good that it should only be studied half an hour before dinner, and that with a certainty of having this very soup, and no other, at the beginning of the meal. It takes thirty-three lines of the Manual to describe the method of its construction, so intricate is it; and finally the soup, after having been seasoned with all sorts of delicious spices, coaxed into mellowness with previously fried vegetables, gently stimulated with cautious simmerings, and then revived with an influence of mushroom ketchup, is described as being "as well coloured, and nearly as good, as if made with gravy meat."

Here, again, and still among the twenty-three soups—all of them delicious—is a compound for the mortification of the flesh which might surely have affected that object better, if there had been fewer nice things in it. It is called almond soup. The very name has a comfortable and succulent sound, which is very inviting, while the directions for making it are suggestive of a rapturous result. "Blanch and chop," says the Manual, "very fine, two ounces of almonds, boil them gently for an hour in a pint of milk, with an onion and a head of celery: then take out the latter, mix together a table-spoonful of flour and a little butter, add half a pint of milk, a little cayenne pepper, mace, and salt; stir the soup on the fire till it has boiled a few minutes, *add a little cream*, and when it boils, serve it directly." This haste in sending it up while in the very crisis of a boil is the culminating touch, and there is in the manner in which the point is urged, something little short of real artistic feeling. Such injunctions as "serve it hot," "it should be sent quite hot to table," "it must not boil again"—this last after some momentous crisis—are phrases of constant recurrence in the treatise, and are urged with affecting vehemence.

It would be pleasant, and profitable as well, no doubt, if space permitted, to linger over the directions for making lobster soup, "with the flesh of two fine lobsters," and gratifying additions of "grated lemon-peel, and anchovy, and cayenne, and the yolk of an egg," or a soup of oysters, which, besides the precious shell-fish themselves, is to contain, among other comfortable ingredients, the yolks of ten hard-boiled eggs, and of five raw ones, and which, as it approaches completion, is to be "stirred well *one way*," and served to the anchorites, who are bent on keeping their Lent in the most orthodox manner, "when thick and smooth." But we must not dwell too long on the soups. There are twenty-seven "made dishes," some of which deserve a passing word, and to a few of which we beg particularly to call the attention of those sacrilegious persons who are in the habit, during Lent or Advent, of pampering their vile bodies with joints of plain meat, or even with nourishing chops and juicy steaks. Let such people cower with shame as they hear what other people put up with. They put up with "oyster sausages," in compounding which you are to "beard your oysters and chop them very fine, to have ready a mixture of bread-crumbs, yolks of eggs, parsley, sweet marjoram, and seasoning to your taste; to mix the whole well together into a thick paste, cut it into pieces the length and breadth of your finger; fry the pieces a nice brown"—we must make things *look* nice at any rate for the poor anchorites—"put mashed potatoes in the centre of your dish, and the sausages all round." Others mortify the flesh on "Parmesan cheese fritters," confectioned thus: You "boil some macaroni very tender, cut it very small, mix it with some grated Parmesan cheese and a little pepper and salt, take a little paste and roll some of the cheese in it, then roll it out thin, cut it with a round cutter, and put some of the cheese mixture between two rounds of the paste, egg and bread-crumb them, fry them in butter or olive oil, and serve in a napkin." Such specimens of the unsavoury food which certain enthusiastic abstinents will bring themselves to endure, are so afflicting to think of, that the reader shall only be asked to dwell on one other specimen of the "made dishes" described in this curious and instructive little volume. The consuming of lobsters seems to be an act of self-denial finding especial favour among the orthodox, and this particular dish, which we are about to consider, is composed mainly of the shell-fish in question. It is called "lobster pudding." To make it properly, you must "pick the meat from a fresh lobster, and after pounding it in a mortar add a handful of bread-crumbs, two yolks of eggs well beaten, two ounces of fresh butter, and salt and cayenne to your taste; then put it into a mould to boil for an hour, pound the *red coral* with a small spoonful of water; mix this with melted butter, and pour it over the pudding. It should look quite red," says the Manual, conceding again something to the eye's gratification; and then he adds, as a finishing touch, "garnish with claws and feelers."

The different modes of cooking eggs which are given in these ascetic pages, are in no respect behind the other recipes in the matter of savoury suggestion. What does the reader think, to take a specimen dish (compatible, let it be remembered, with strict fasting), of the following? "Eggs with forcemeat balls. Take half a pound of bread-crumbs, and rub two ounces of butter into it, adding one ounce of onion, and a little lemon-thyme; season with cayenne, salt, and a little mace; add two eggs well beaten, and two table-spoonfuls of cream; roll it into balls, fry them in butter, lay them on a flat dish, with three eggs boiled hard and cut in two; pour some brown sauce over the whole; and serve some brown sauce in a boat and some currant jelly." Not a bad substitute, perhaps, for the cold mutton of which the orthodox must not partake on any terms.

Or, supposing the above not sufficiently savoury to console the faithful for their privations in the matter of animal food, perhaps an "Onion omelette" might prove satisfactory. In order to prepare this penitential dish you are directed to "take six small onions, slice them, and put them in a dish with butter, salt, and pepper, and bake them till tender; beat four eggs well, add a cupful of milk, a little salt, two ounces of bread-crumbs, and the sliced onions; put all this into a buttered pie-dish, and bake it in a moderately hot oven; serve with brown sauce."

One can imagine the possibility of concocting a dinner from the pages of this Manual, which should be strictly in keeping with sackcloth and ashes, and yet not wholly unsatisfactory to the human palate. The repast might commence with that vegetable soup of which it is affirmed, that when it is properly prepared it "is as well-coloured, and nearly as

good as if made with gravy meat." This might be followed by the oyster sausages, described above, or by "pulled fish," a prodigious composition of fish with "all the bones taken out," mixed with cream, and flavoured with ketchup and anchovy sauce, stewed with bread-crumbs, basted with butter, and salamandered "just before you serve it up." The pulled fish disposed of, a shift might be made to sustain nature on the lobster pudding, with which we have already made acquaintance, or some other of the "made dishes" of which there is, as we have seen, a choice of twenty-seven. Then there are the twenty-one egg preparations to fall back upon; the "curried eggs," the "eggs with forcemeat balls," the "cheese, shrimp, and oyster omelettes," or the omelette prepared with macaroni, a very pleasing composition indeed, as described in the Manual. A course of vegetables—twenty modes to choose from—would come next. A potato pie made with potatoes sliced very thin, with chopped onions between each layer, with two ounces of fresh butter cut into little bits, with the yolks of four eggs boiled hard, covered close with puff-paste, a table-spoonful of mushroom ketchup being "poured in through a funnel," and the whole baked for an hour and a half, might follow. This, or the dish known to "externs" as cauliflower "au gratin," and infinitely savoury, would do for a vegetable course, and would naturally be succeeded by a selection from the forty-three sweet dishes to which the concluding pages of the Manual are devoted, and among which are included almond pudding; apricot soufflé; Genevoise paste; Italian cream; solid syllabub; and a host more of puddings and pies, and creams, and jellies, and cakes, and biscuits, each more ravishingly delicious than the other. Nor must it be forgotten, that to render all the different preparations of which this "maigre" dinner is composed more attractive than they are already made by the savoury nature of their integral parts, there is that remaining list of thirty-four sauces at the disposal of the group of ascetics who are punishing themselves around their imaginary board—Dutch sauce for fish, piquant sauces for the entrées, white sauces for vegetables, orange sauce or cream sauce for the sweets, and some besides which seem suited to anything or everything, and nice enough to render water-gruel itself a joyous compound. This "Lenten entertainment" would conclude with an anchovy toast, or a plate of devilled biscuits, for the preparation of each of which stimulating condiments, the Manual gives directions; the whole to be followed by any amount of good wine; it being expressly stated at the commencement of this curiously anomalous compilation that "no fluids, unless such as by their quality or substance have the character of animal food," are to be looked upon as breaking a fast.

It is difficult to conceive, that people with ordinarily constructed palates can by possibility look forward with any thing short of absolute satisfaction, to the approach of those particular seasons to which these good things are considered appropriate. One cannot help picturing to oneself the delight of the younger members of a family especially, when the maigre days are coming round. No more coarse, veiny shoulders of mutton, or greasy loins. No more suet puddings with thinly scattered raisins. "Now," one can imagine these youngsters exclaiming, "now for the oyster sausages and the lobster puddings, the scollop macaroni and the shrimp omelette, the potato pie and the marmalade pudding. Now for the savoury sauce with the fish, and the orange sauce with the sweets." To say truth, it seems as if the author of the Manual himself were not always able to suppress some feeling of this kind. We have already observed his touching anxiety for the serving of everything in a comfortable condition of heat, in order that it may reach the ascetics for whom he is providing, while at its best; and a very cursory examination of the collection, will show that our author is quite as anxious that his dishes should lose no particle of flavour that can be imparted to them, as that they should come to table piping hot, or icy cold, as the case may be. He speaks openly of a certain composition made of pounded cheese as "excellent," and in treating of the best way of preparing anchovy toast, he says, of the last method suggested, that "it is *still* better" when fried in a particular manner which he mentions. Of one especial treatment of Jerusalem artichokes, too, he asserts that it is "much admired," which one would say was a reason for *not* partaking of it on a fast day. This is a "nice" dish for breakfast, is his candid—and, let us add, perfectly truthful—estimate of buttered eggs: while of another composition he opines that it "is a tasty dish for collation on fasting days," which sentence, with its close juxtaposition of the words "tasty" and "fasting" may be taken as a thoroughly good specimen of the volume.

The word collation, mentioned above, may, perhaps, need a word of explanation for the benefit of the uninitiated. It is a dodgy, evasive sort of expression, and seems to be used to indicate a dodgy and evasive kind of repast. "Besides the principal meal," says our Manual, "usually taken at noon, a collation is allowed in the evening. At the former, the quantity is not limited; at the latter, the quantity (except on Christmas-eve, when it may be doubled) should not exceed eight ounces." And then comes the following clause—a postscript not without significance. "For any reasonable cause, the collation may be taken at noon, and the principal meal in the evening." In other words, you may have an eight-ounce luncheon (a good-sized egg weighs only two ounces and a half) in the middle of the day, and a dinner of unlimited quantity, and consisting of any of the good things enumerated in the pages of the Manual, at your usual dinner hour in the evening; and all this, by the exercise of a very moderate amount of dodging and evasion.

Dodging and evasion everywhere. Let your hair shirt be made with the down from a kitten's

skin, and it won't scratch. Let the knotted cords of your discipline be of worsted furniture cord, and it won't hurt. Let the fish which you are allowed to eat, be made into savoury cakes, and let your lentils be stewed in fresh cream, and so it may be brought about that you shall be a first-rate anchorite, without inflicting much torment on your flesh, and an ascetic of the highest order, without introducing anything but what is good and toothsome into your penitential diet.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XVII.—*Continued.*

TEN O'CLOCK.—How cool I can take up this pen and write, forming letters and words very carefully and neatly, and yet I am numbed, dulled, almost stupefied, and can imagine a mother who has heard of all her children being swept off at one *coup*. Ah! that word! Not growing frantic or mad, but being quite calm, I can even take out these notes, and count them. Yes, here is the total:

Sixteen louis won back, all lost; lost, also, one hundred of Mr. Bernard's money; total loss of the night, one hundred and sixteen, besides the sixty lost before! This is the accurate sum. It does not matter what is left.

I shall put down everything, so that it shall be all read hereafter by those whom it shall most concern—if there are any such. I am very glad I kept this diary so minutely, as it will show the gradual stages of the whole fall. God—God Almighty forgive me! *What* a fall! And my sanctimonious jumble of prayers before each act of theft—for so it is—theft and *embezzlement*. O Pharisee, hypocrite! This was my piety and my prayers. O my poor, lost, loved little Dora, there is a gulf between us now, wider than the sea between Calais and Dover. A letter (I never see these letters now, except by accident, my eyes are growing so dim). I see—from the banker himself. Nothing could be better. He will be in Homburg himself to-morrow at two, and will call at my lodgings to receive his money. He hopes I will be punctual this time, as he has some very important business with me, owing to a letter he received from Mr. Bernard. He is glad to find that I had been too late to get a letter of credit, as it would not be wanted. Quite right and proper—everything is coming gradually to a head. I must sit on here calmly till morning, and look at the situation; and I am astonished how calmly I can do it. I must *do* something, it matters not what, and don't in the least care; but still something must be chosen as a course. The felon always decides on a course, either to fly, or give himself up, or make confession. Which of the two last would be the simplest?

Madness, crime, folly, *embezzlement!* O Dora, Dora! I hold my temples with my hands pressed close. I could cast myself on the ground, and roll in the dust. O Heavens fall on me and cover me! Yet it was insanity. Devilish fingers—not mine—were tearing the notes from my pocket. As they fluttered away for ever it seemed to me the only way to stop them was to clutch at them. There, I hear a step—it is Grainger.

Midnight.—I can still write it all quite calmly and leisurely, for I am determined all the stages of this business shall go down minutely. It will make such a record, and may, perhaps, be of use to others.

I am so glad to see a face that is familiar; and when he asks will I come out and sit under the colonnade, I agree mechanically.

"So you have been sent supplies of money?" he said. "That D'Eyncourt told me he saw you sowing your louis thickly, putting down like a man. Have you come in for a fortune?"

"No," I said.

"Then how did you manage it?"

"Don't worry me now with questions," I said; "don't for God's sake!"

"O I see, I understand—a delicate matter. And I don't want to pry into any man's affairs. However, as you *have* money, perhaps you would let me have my little loan, *or rather—D'Eyncourt.*"

"D'Eyncourt! What do you mean?" I said.

"I say *his* money. Why, were you pastoral enough to suppose that a poor devil like me could lend money? No; I asked him for you, and pressed it, too. What friend, I'd like to know, goes borrowing for a friend?"

"You did this," I said, covering my face: "yet it is only one more gulf of degradation."

"Degradation! Then pay him at once. Here, put it in my hands, or pay him yourself."

"Yes, yes. He *must* be paid."

"Yes he must, if he hasn't gone telling it about. But my good friend," he added slowly, "if he is only to be paid *in a certain way*, that is by *diverting* other funds——"

"You are going too far, Grainger. What are you speaking to me in this way for? Do you see the state I am in? Do you want to

send me out into the street raging, frantic, or to those woods yonder?—take care!"

"Oh, folly!" he said, "I want to do nothing so foolish. What object is it to me what you do? I *do* see the state you are in, and therefore, if I may give you a bit of advice, I would take care, I would, indeed. You are in a very ticklish way. Tell me honestly what you have lost. Two hundred, D'Eyncourt said."

"Something under that," I answered. "But it is all one."

"That is as you look at it," he answered. "The dock isn't one." I started at this ugly word. "I tell you what," he said eagerly, "this is a matter you can't get over in this way. You must do something, my friend, then, desperate or not; a man in your situation can't be nice. Halloo, Stopford—come from Zero?"

"I wish I had; I am running home for some cash. Why Zero hasn't been heard of since five o'clock. As I live, no."

"Now is the time," said Grainger, leaping up. "Come in all of us, or it will be too late."

Was this a call or an inspiration? I did not much care now. Yet I went in with them. There was a vast crowd stooping over; Grainger elbowed his way to the table. "Pas de Zéro encore?" he said familiarly to the croupier. The other answered gruffly, "No."

Every one was "piling on the agony," as a man called it, for it seemed certain that the overdue Zero must arrive, every moment. Here were ten, twenty, thirty louis on, and here were men increasing their stake every moment. There was the awful sense of *contagion*, which the mere looking on produces; it made me tremble with a sense that I was helpless and could not resist, and yet I was calm. Grainger had clutched my arm.

"Think of what I said; this is an ugly business, the rope and the dock, my friend. Here's a chance of a reprieve, and you're a fool if you don't try it. As well suffer for a sheep as for a lamb."

This coarse allusion embodied whatever was floating in my mind. He was only right to speak so, for I had, of course, forfeited all title to any but the plainest speaking. The strangest thing was the calm way in which I could look at, and measure the situation so accurately. He was right—a few louis more or less did not lessen or increase my *crime*. And even the man I had so basely injured would approve of my investing a trifle, as it were, to get him back what I had *robbed* him of. That is the correct word. In a moment I resolved to use five or seven louis for this purpose. I took out a hundred-franc note and presented it to be changed by the croupier, with the usually suspicious alacrity. He looked up at my face suspiciously, but this was only *my* suspicion. They look at every one's face to whom they pay their vile and deceptive courtesies. I wonder how I go through all this so calmly. But it will only be for a short time longer. And as I sit here, I vow to that Heaven I have so outraged, I meant well in this last stage of my villany. I put down my gold piece, and scarcely found room. I did not go through the hyprocrisy of a prayer. It disappeared, I put down again. "It must come this time," said Grainger. It flew away. A third, a fourth, a fifth—"D—n! d—v—sh!" I heard some such mutterings from Grainger, whose own silver had been going too. In these curses—I shall conceal nothing—I half joined. This devilish obstinacy, I would like to meet with obstinacy as fiendship. Then it for the first time struck me, even if this wonderful fortune occurred to me, what a beggarly return it would be—just thirty-five pieces, which would not near indemnify. A devilish obstinacy, I said again. I felt a sort of rage, and fury as devilish, and as I say an obstinacy, that would have made me put down everything, take a knife, gash my arm, let the blood stream out on their cursed board, if they wanted that! A soul's eternal fate—they would not care, for it is not to be made into money. They leave *that* to *him* whose business it is properly. Every one round me is saying it *must* come up in three or four coups more. There are many damp brows round me, but mine is strangely cool. No sign of it; but they shall not beat *me*. They don't know whom they have to deal with; five this time, and five gone. The grey-headed croupier says he never recollects such a thing, but he will bet "it will arrive within ten minutes." Every one still piling. So shall I, by the Heaven above me. I am too far gone to draw back, and here are three hundred-franc notes—it is too slow changing them. Oh, vile, vile, wretches to have brought me to this, to have drawn me into these toils! The curse of the wretched and the ruined, of the widows and wives, and children that turn out wicked, follow you, and stifle you on your death-beds! May your gilded rooms and your painted roofs come tumbling on you in ruins; may your—but I must go on, and tell all calmly. It is no use counting the notes to

see what is left. I think I must have out about five hundred pounds more in this frightful combat. It was no use going on from sheer stolidity, and for a fiendish wish that they should not get *all*. I began to stop; Grainger had long since lost all. "Give me some money," he said; "I shall go on while I have a franc left on the face of God's earth."

"There," I said calmly, "there is one last note, five hundred francs; after that the curtain may come down."

Oh, I did gasp a prayer at that awful moment. "O merciful God," I said, "have pity, have mercy, see what depends on this and spare me, save me—the most abject and guilty of your creatures, and I swear——" It came up "premier," as if to mock me, and I fell back almost from the table.

Grainger had caught me by the arm. "You are not going, after all that money thrown away? Are you mad, or half-witted, or do you want to be hung? Come back, you fool; I tell you it must come in the next two or three times."

"Not another franc shall they get," I said, looking at him desperately. "Let me go home—anything, or let me fall down here and die among these villains."

A sudden rustle and half ejaculation. The click, and the sharp voice of the croupier, "ZERO!" It had come at last, like the shower of rain, long prayed for in the desert.

"You fool," whispered Grainger, "*you deserve it!*"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE shower of rain, indeed, on every spot, save my dry, dusty heart. It was a pile of gold, and the paying out took long. I could look on. I saw it all done, then walked out into the open air. Not to think of what was to be done. Ah! There was nothing to be done, but to get away, to go through the first necessary process of shutting out all sympathies, affection. Dora,—I have finished with all that, now and for evermore. Oh, is there pity in heaven, or indulgence or mercy? No, no—that was no *chance* that made me stop exactly at that moment. It was design, punishment. I was handed over to those vile torturers. My God in Heaven, what have I done to deserve all this? What wretch, the vilest of sinners, could be punished, crushed, destroyed for ever, with such refined tortures.

. . . . I heard steps behind me. It was Grainger tramping up to me. His eyes were full of fury and impatience.

"A nice business you have made of it," he said. "What have you lost of the money that was entrusted to you?" I did not answer. "I say, what have you lost of the stolen money—half?"

"Say nearly all," I replied. "The world will know pretty soon."

"I daresay. And to think that you might have it all in your pocket now. Does that add to your reflections?"

"Don't weary me now, Grainger," I said; "let me go home."

"Don't weary you! And all the fine preaching, the prayers! This is the end of it! Lecturing me! Infernal effrontery, by God!"

"You are right, Grainger. It was effrontery, and hypocrisy also."

"And so clever, too, with your directions and advice, and superior knowledge of the game. Clever, indeed," he added, with growing fury. "So you thought yourself all your life, and when you beat me about *her*. By God I have beaten *you* this time, and beaten you well! Time brings round everything if we only wait."

Nothing could astonish me, or disturb me now; but I looked at him steadily.

"Oh, you may look as you will, but I planned it well. Planned it, every step of it, from the first day to the present. Were you fool enough to think I could forgive you, or forget you, or forget *her?* By Heaven, though, I never thought it would end in this way, I never dreamed it would end so satisfactorily. Go home now and sleep, my friend; *Zero* did it for me."

So I am fool as well as villain, and am a little surprised. But the close of all which must come— And here I find a square envelope, large and with "Services Télégraphiques" written on it. Not ill! Not dead! Oh that would be the real terror and misfortune. No. It shall go in here, and take its place in this odd record.

"I have just heard that Mr. Bernard leaves to-morrow morning suddenly, and they tell me is going to Germany, about some money transaction. I think it right to tell you this. What can it mean? O, *do be careful*. I shall write to-night.

"YOUR DORA."

This is better—things are improving. I am glad he suspects, and is coming. Grainger, I suppose, wrote to tell him. I shall give myself up to him, to do as he likes with, or—who knows what may happen before he comes. It is not cruelty to abandon her. If I stayed she must be abandoned all the same. The jail—the dock—before *that* was reached, it would all

kill her. Better for me to glide away quietly, and save her this—*that* might kill her too; but there would be no disgrace, and Mr. Bernard would be indulgent—as regards his tongue at least.

O, I long to be going. I want rest—rest—rest—for in this mind here, about this heart, are caldrons boiling, fires raging, and engines working: I could not go on with *that*. A day or two more would be the utmost.

. . . . I have just counted out these notes, about seven hundred pounds gone—*embezzled*. O, demons, furies, be proud of your work! You with the rakes and cards are hell's own precious emissaries; but no, this is not the time—I have done with all *that*. I must look forward a day or two, and plan a little carefully before I go down to those who have bought my wretched soul. O, why did I not die at my desk and leave an innocent name to my sweet, my lost Dora! Here is her little picture again, her smooth hair and snowy dress, and her shy smile, and look of surprise. Shall I tear it, as I could tear out my own vile heart? When you read these frantic words, these ravings of your guilty husband, whose vanity and folly have brought him to this, O, I would give all the chances of my vile soul to be released from the fiery furnace, and standing by looking down on you. And that prayer, which I *did* say— But what use are prayers now?

. . . . *Morning*—I never slept last night and I think sat in that place until the grey of the morning. Then I went out to walk; such a lovely calm sunrise, so still and solemn and hushed, like the morning of an execution. The honest creatures in their blouses, who till the soil here and bring in marketing, are asleep or just rousing themselves. The gaudy looking hotels are bathed in slumber. Then the sloping Kiesleffstrasse and the balcony in which I so often see the young and pretty girl, decoying the doves and sparrows with crumbs. There is the Victoria Hotel and the Russie and the Quatre Saisons, all shut and solemn as jails. There is the money-lender's, "a Bank," he calls himself, and the post which brings and carries misery, and agonised confessions home. And there is the great red sandstone temple of play, every stone of which has cost hearts and lives, and worlds of ruin and agonies. As I pass by I leave them my last hearty Curse; on them, their administrations, their familiars, and their blood-won money, their works, and their pomps. God, in his justice who has dealt so rigorously with me, may he deal with them, and not delay the reckoning too late!

. . . . As the place wakes up, I have come in again; but I cannot sit down or stop. I must be in motion. If I am not, my heart and soul begin their work again, and I shall die in agony. But I have my own plan for dying. The poor wretch that blew his brains out over their numbers, must have discomposed them sorely. It was not so bad a way to spite them. That blood should surely call to Heaven for vengeance.

. . . . I have been up the hills, out among the woods, walking, rushing about, flying from myself. Mr. Bernard ought to be here by the midday train. I will tell the other to come back at the same time; and to them both I will make confession of the whole. And *then*, after *that*—— However, all in good time. Here is the packet of these fatal notes—what remains, at least—so neatly tied up, with a short letter. No tears and ridiculous theatrical repentance. I am going to pay a price sufficient for all that—a heavy reckoning; so I may leave out all *that*. Surely I am to enter on a long eternal period of penal servitude, and with *no* commutation. Everything is in order. A letter to Dora? No, no. Better separate all that finally from yesterday. I am not worthy to address a line to her. *She is lost to me for ever, and ever, and evermore!* They, they—those demons—have torn me from her!

The day is sultry hot, but not so sultry as the furnaces inside here at my heart. The engine is working furiously, and will not let me rest a moment in one spot. I *must* go out, and out again, into the sun, into the raging sun. This morning is like a dull long night, and I seem to be tossing on a pillow. Go on, go on, move on! But there is stolid oppressive monotony about it. It is an hour yet from noon, when this gambling begins.

. . . . I have come back to my room again, where the woman of the house comes to persecute me. I suppose fearful about her rent. What does she want, then? For God's sake, then, let her go, and leave me in peace!

This ridiculous diary, as I turn it over; what folly, what complacency, and, O, what happiness! And yet I meant well—at least, I *think* I did. How am I to tell now? O, hours, go by, and end this. . . . I shall not stay pent within these four white walls. They seem crushing me in—stifling. . . . I must walk,

move, walk about. That is the only thing to save me for an hour or so.

Here I have been out, and am back again; but the hot monotony goes on.

. . . . How slowly the hours are going by! The train must be in; and they must have arrived. I shall carry this straight into my bedroom now, and beside it I place this little bottle, so convenient and so handy. Lucky I bought it. Sweet little executioner, too decent and genteel almost for a felon like me. Was there ever such impunity—to escape that richly-deserved prison cropping, penal servitude, the number, and the mask, and the twenty years! Richly deserved! And yet have I not been something of a poor victim, weak in his own folly? Mercy, O, mercy for me! O my sweet Dora! I must, I must break through that resolution, and write something—a word. Lost love. . . . But what can I say? The wretched Othello, he gave a sort of message—once—just before he was about to——die.

I pray you in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak
.
Of one not easily jealous, *but being wrought,*
Perplexed in the extreme.

Yes, "being wrought," I say piteously, let *that* be considered! Not that I dare want mercy; why should it be given to me? But who was ever so cruelly wrought, tortured, wrung, hunted on to ruin and death? Othello, poor soul!

I remember the night we were at the theatre, and heard the unhappy wretch. It seemed to be real life. O, sultry hours, advance, advance, and end all! They must have begun their play by this. Is it sinful to wish them one last curse, that may whelm them all together? But what have I to do with sinners or sinful? Then let the Judgment follow them, as it has followed me—sharp, swift, eternal!

What! a cab clattering to the door! Heavens! They are upon me at last! Light is breaking in the cloud. All in good time.

Now to get ready, and play my part with some little dignity. Dignity! Fine dignity indeed!. . . . No, it is only the banker. There, I have stolen in here again. I cannot sit and talk with *him*. Neither could I tell him. Much better wait until both are present together, and to both I can then tell all. They will go to the window, I suppose, and call in some one, or Mr. Bernard will send himself for a policeman in a spiked helmet. How little he knows. I don't want to baffle him, or what they call the ends of justice. I shall atone for all, never fear, but in my, own way. O, some one send money! let there be some miracle wrought, to save my name from the *felony!* It *may* be merged, though, in the wretched end. There! another cab. It must be Bernard. *He* has arrived, and is coming up the stairs. Now, now. Heaven compose me, just for two minutes! Give me strength, God of Heaven, whose laws I am about to outrage! But there is, there may be, mercy, and the world has dealt with me, O! *so* hardly. Tell him all calmly; nothing extenuate, like the wretched Othello; and then, when he pours out his furious reproaches, and turns to send for his police, take *this* out; have it down in a second. Tell him "I have deceived the senate." No, no, indeed no; but choose that precious moment to beg, beg for *her*. O Dora, sweet one; come in here, loved picture, in here, next to this vile heart. Let them find it there. How strange he does not come up! Hark! There is his step at last. Put *this* in my pocket—now, now for the last scene or wait—better take it at once—who knows what may interfere? There. How strange—how horrible! Judgment is signed, and signed for ever. Yet I wouldn't go back. Yes, tap away at the door. Come in, Mr. Bernard. What is this? I cannot go to you—now—come in, or it will be too late. The waiter—the waiter with a note. But I have done with notes. But whose hand is this—it seems so dim. Why, not Dora's?

"Our cousin is dead, suddenly, from a fall from his horse. You know what a change that makes to us. Money, lands, everything is ours and my darling's. O! can you bear a surprise? But don't be alarmed, or agitated. Think of what would please you most! I started from Datchley yesterday with Mr. Bernard. We travelled all night. We are here. *I am below,* waiting, waiting to fling myself into your arms. May I come up to you?"

What is this? *I hear her voice outside!* O God Almighty . . . forgive . . . forgive!

THE END OF FATAL ZERO.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VI. THE RUBICON.

Of course Walter Joyce was a hero of heroes for days after the ice-accident. Lady Hetherington for the time being threw off every semblance of insolence and patronage, complimented him in the highest terms on his bravery and presence of mind, and assured him that he had established a claim upon their gratitude which they could never repay. Lord Hetherington was visibly affected, and had great difficulty in thanking his sister's preserver in anything like a coherent manner, lapsing into wild outbursts of "Don't you know!" and explaining that it would be impossible for him to express the feelings and that kind of thing, under which he laboured. The gentlemen from the barracks, who had hitherto regarded "old Hetherington's secretary-fellow" as a person utterly unworthy of notice, began to think that they had been mistaken. Young Patey sent a short account of the incident to the sporting paper of which he was an esteemed correspondent, and made a mental note to ask Joyce to play in a football match which was about to come off, and of which he had the direction. Colonel Tapp not merely assisted in carrying Joyce's senseless body to the tent, whereby he became much damped with drippings, which he nobly ignored, but sent off one of the men for the surgeon of the depôt, and evinced an amount of interest and attention, very rare in the self-contained old warrior. Mr. Biscoe said very little indeed; he had been the only person close to the ridge of the broken ice, and he might have heard what Lady Caroline whispered in Joyce's ear, and he might have formed his own opinion of how matters stood from what he saw then. But he said nothing. His lips wreathed into a peculiar smile two or three times in the course of the evening, but nothing escaped them, and as he was smoking his after-dinner cigar in his study, he chuckled in a manner which was not to be accounted for by the perusal of anything in the Guardian which he was supposed to be reading, more especially as he dropped his eyeglass, laid down the paper, and rubbed his hands with intense enjoyment. Just before he dropped asleep, he said, "It's a thousand pities Joyce is not in orders! He'd have had Chudleigh Rectory when old Whiting goes, as safe as possible: old Whiting can't live long, and Chudleigh must be worth twelve hundred a year!"

"Mr. Joyce have Chudleigh? Why should he have had Chudleigh? What makes you think that, Robert?" asked the partner of his joys, from the neighbouring pillow.

"Ah! what indeed?" was all the answer Robert made, and was snoring in an instant.

What did Lady Caroline herself say? Very little. She had a slight access of fever for three days, and kept her room for a week. The first time Joyce saw her was in the library where he was at work. She came across the room with outstretched hand, and in a few very simple words told him she owed her life to him, and had come to tell him so, and to thank him for it. She was looking wonderfully beautiful; Joyce thought he had never seen her to such advantage. The usual pallor of her cheeks was relieved by a deep rose flush, her violet eyes were more than ever luminous, and she had departed from her usual

style of coiffure, her chesnut hair being taken off her forehead, and gathered up in a huge plait at the back of her head.

"You recollect my first mention to you of the intention of having that dreadful ice-party, Mr. Joyce?" said Lady Caroline, after the first speeches of acknowledgment.

"Perfectly, it was in this room, almost where we are sitting now!"

"Don't you remember—I hope you don't, and if you don't, it's silly in me to remind you, though I can't help it—that I had been quizzing you about the way in which you remained devoted to your writing, and assured you that we should only attempt to tear you away from it, and to get you to join us on one other occasion before we went to town, and that was to this skating affair. It would have been but a poor look-out for one of the party, if you hadn't been there."

"You're giving me much greater credit than I deserve, Lady Caroline; and indeed during all the past week I've felt that I've been placed in a false position in the hero-worship I've received. It certainly happened that I got to the place before Mr. Biscoe, and I was in quicker than he, but that was because I was a little younger, and had longer limbs. But what I've done to be made so much of, I really don't know!"

"You've saved my life, Mr. Joyce—and won my eternal gratitude!" and again she stretched out her hand.

"The last is ample reward for the first, Lady Caroline! No other recognition is necessary!" And he took her hand, but he merely held it for an instant, and bowed over it and let it go. Did not even press it, never thought of attempting to raise it to his lips. Lady Caroline withdrew it quietly with a half-laugh. He was the coldest, most insensate, impassible man in the world, she thought; clever, and with a great amount of odd indescribable fascination, but a perfect stone.

He was not. He was a simple, single-minded man, unaccustomed to the ways of flirtation, and utterly uncomprehending any of the mysteries of the craft. He had felt naturally proud of the notice which Lady Caroline had taken of him, had written of it to Marian, attributing it, as he honestly thought it was due, to Lady Caroline's superior education and love of books attracting her to him for companionship. He was by no means an observant man, as but few students are, but he had noticed, as he thought, a certain amount of freedom in manners generally at Westhope, which was very different from anything he had previously seen. He ascribed it to the different grade of society, and took but little notice of it. He must, however, have been more than blind not to have seen that in Lady Caroline's conduct towards him at the time of the accident, there was something more than this; that in that whispered word "Walter," and the tone in which it was whispered, there was an unmistakable admission of a sentiment which he had hitherto chosen to ignore, and which he determined to ignore still. Walter Joyce was but human, and it would be absurd to deny that his vanity was flattered. He had a sufficient feeling for Lady Caroline, based on gratitude, and nurtured by general liking, to experience a certain compunction for her, placed as she must inevitably find herself by his mode of treatment of her, but regarding that mode of treatment he had never an instant's doubt. He had been brought up in far too strict a school of honour ever to palter with himself for a moment, much less with any one else. His heart was in Marian Ashurst's keeping, his liege love, and in not one single pulsation should it be false to her. All this he had thought out before the interview with Lady Caroline, and his conduct then was exactly as he had prescribed to himself it should be. He took no credit to himself for his coldness and reserve, nor indeed did he deserve any, for he felt as calmly and coldly as he acted. There was but one person in the world with power to make his heart leap, his pulses fill, to rouse his energy with a look—to cloud his hopes with a word. Why was she silent then? She could not know how critical the time might have been, she should never know it, but he felt that he wanted her advice, advice on the general questions of his life, and he determined to write to her in a way that should elicit it.

Thus he wrote:

"Westhope, Friday.

"My dearest Marian, I am still without any news of you, although this is the third letter I have written since I received your last. I know that you must have been very much, and very specially, engaged, I know, as you will have gathered from my last hasty few lines, that poor Tom Creswell is dead, and I feel that you must have been called upon to your utmost to play the part of comforter, and to bring your keen sympathies and busy brains into active use to restore something like a semblance of

ordinary comfort from that disordered and desolate household. That you are the mainstay of the family in their trouble, as of course few would be, I happen to know. Did I tell you how? Mr. Gould, who is Lord Hetherington's principal business agent, showed me a letter he had had from you, written in Mr. Creswell's behalf, about the impossibility of the poor old gentleman's carrying out some sale of land, about which he had been previously negotiating, under the existing melancholy circumstances. It seemed so strange to see the handwriting, so familiar and so dear to me, addressed to another; treating of business topics, and yet conveying information, which was surely interesting to me, but of which I was yet ignorant. However, you had your duty to do to the people who had been so kind to you, and who had done much more than their duty by you during the time of your trials, and I, who know you so well, have no doubt that you have done it, not merely in the letter but in the spirit. I suppose that by this time the first shock of grief will have passed away, and that the household at Woolgreaves will be assuming something like its normal state; and I presume, therefore, that you and Mrs. Ashurst will be soon thinking of bringing your visit to an end, even if by this time you have not already entered upon the lodgings which you told me you had in view. I have no doubt that if this be so now, or whenever it comes, both you and Mrs. Ashurst will much miss the material comfort which you have enjoyed during the last few months. It is impossible that it should be otherwise, but you, at all events, have long had a clear idea of your future, and so long as you are with her I do not fear Mrs. Ashurst's becoming a prey to despair. The woman who battled so bravely by your dear father's side, is not likely to give way now that the heat of the contest is over, and a retreat, humble indeed, but sufficient for existence, is provided for her. I should almost rather fear the effect of the change upon you. I should very much fear it, if I laid much stress upon the opinions with which the last letter I received from you was rife, opinions breathing the very essence of worldly philosophy, but scarcely such as one would expect to find in a young girl's letter to her lover. However, I do not lay much stress on these opinions; I know that it is the fashion just now to affect a cynicism which is not really felt, and to ascribe to oneself faults and follies which have no substantial basis. I am sure that you must have become infected with this idea, and that you wrote under its influence, for nothing could be more opposite than your new doctrine to the teachings of your youth, and the example of your parents.

"It is time, however, my dear Marian, that we should each shake ourselves free from any little affectations or delusions which have hitherto possessed us, and make up our minds to look our position resolutely in the face. I say both of us, because I am perfectly conscious of having permitted myself to start in life as the victim of a delusion of a very different kind to yours. I was as sanguine as you were depressed, and when, on the day we parted, you had a notion that there was an end to all happiness to be enjoyed mutually by us, I had a feeling that I was taking my first step towards the premiership or the governorship of the Bank of England. I pray God that your idea was as baseless as mine. I *know* that my position can never be a great or a wealthy one, that all I ever get I must earn by my handwork, and I am perfectly content, so long as I have your approval of my steps, and you yourself as my reward.

"But we must not dream any more, Marian, either of us, and you, especially, must not suffer yourself again, for whatever reason, to be tempted out of your regular sphere. All your attention henceforth must be given to the joint interests which must be paramount in your heart. Life progresses, dear. How the months have slipped away since we parted! We must not let youth and health and all that is best pass out of it, and leave us still pursuing a flying shadow, and waiting for better days till we shall come together. Not now, or ever, will I take any step as regards my future without your counsel and consent, considering as I do that that future is yours as much as mine. But I want to be assured of your hearty interest and desire for co-operation in my affairs, Marian! I feel sure I have it; I know it is almost absurd in me to doubt its existence, but I have been so long away from you, and you have been so long without writing to me, that I long to read the assurance in your own hand. What would I not give—if I had anything, poor wretch!—to hear it from your lips, but that is impossible just yet.

"Now, what we have to think of is definite and pressing. I must give a decisive answer within a week, and you will see the bearing and importance of that decisive answer on our future. I believe I could stay on here for any time I chose. The big

history-book, though I work hard at it every day, is as yet only in its commencement, and I am told that when the family goes to town next week I am to accompany them, and to devote my time in London to purely secretarial work, correcting my lord in his speeches, writing his letters, &c., while the history of the Wests is to remain in abeyance until the autumn. Everybody is particularly kind to me, and had I never 'lifted my eyes to my master's daughter,' like the 'prentice of old, I might have been very happy here. But I have other hopes in view, and a married private secretary would be impossible. It's lucky, then, that there is another opening—yes, Marian, a new chance, which I think promises, splendidly promises, to realise all we have hoped—all I have hoped for, all you can have justly anticipated—speedy union for us both, under decent competence when united. Listen.

"My old friend Byrne, of whom you heard so much when I was in London, wrote to me some time since telling me that my name had been suggested, as the correspondent then required for a London newspaper in Berlin. I thought but little of it at the moment, for though, thanks to old Dr. Heitmann, in the dear old days at Helmingham, I knew myself to be a tolerable German scholar, I doubted whether I had sufficient 'nous' and experience of the world for the post. I wrote this to Byrne, and I think he was rather of my opinion, but the man with whom the recommendation rested, and who knew me from having met me constantly during those weeks I was living with Byrne, and knew also some of my qualifications, as it was through him I obtained those odd jobs on the press, declared that I would be the very man for their purpose, and has so pressed the matter that I have agreed to let them have my decision in a week's time. For that decision I come to you. They offer me a year's engagement to start with, with the certainty of renewal if I fulfil their expectations, and four hundred a year, with the prospect of a rise. Four hundred a year, Marian, and in a country where money goes much further than in England! Four hundred a year, and we united for ever, and dear Mrs. Ashurst—for, of course, she will be with us—with a son as well as a daughter to tend and care for her. Now, you see why I made the commencement of my letter rather sombre and gloomy, in order to heighten the brilliancy of the finish! Now you see why I talked about the lodgings and the privations—because there is no need to submit to any of them!

"Marian darling, you must answer this instantly! I have no doubt as to the tone of your reply, but I can do nothing until I get it, and time presses. Don't be afraid of any ill-feeling on the part of Lord Hetherington or any one here. I have been able to render them something of a service. I will tell you about it when we meet—and they will all be delighted at anything which brings good tortune to me. And now good-bye! Think how little time now before I shall hold you in my arms! Write at once! God bless you, now and ever.

"Your Walter."

Sunday morning at Woolgreaves. Bright, splendid sunshine, the frost all gone, and nature renovated by her six months' sleep asserting herself in green bud and lovely almond blossom, and fresh sprouting herbage on every side. Far away on the horizon lay Brocksopp, the week-day smoke cloud, which no wind dispelled, yet hovering like a heavy pall over its sabbath stillness; but the intervening landscape was fresh, and fine, and calculated to inspire peaceful thoughts and hopeful aspirations in all who looked on it. Such thoughts and such aspirations the contemplation of the scene inspired in old Mrs. Ashurst, who sat propped up by pillows in a large easy-chair in her sitting-room, gazing out of the window, looking at nothing, but enjoying everything with the tranquil serenity of old age. For several years past there had not been much life in the old lady, and there was very little now; her vital powers, never very strong, had been decaying slowly but surely, and Dr. Osborne knew that the time was not far distant, when the widow of his old friend would be called away to rejoin the husband she had so dearly loved, in the Silent Land.

"A case of gradual decay, my dear sir," said the little doctor, who had been up all night, bringing the heir of a neighbouring squire into the world, and who had stopped at Woolgreaves on his way home, and asked for breakfast—a meal which he was then taking in company with his host. "What we call the vis vitæ quietly giving way."

"And by what I gather from you, doctor, I fear our old friend will not be much longer with us?"

"It is impossible to say, but I should think not! Sad thing for the daughter;

she's very much attached to her mother, and will feel the loss very much. Wonderful girl that, sir!"

"Miss Ashurst? She is, indeed!" said Mr. Creswell, abstractedly.

"Such a clever head, such individuality, such dominant will! Let her make up her mind to a thing and you may consider it done! Charming girl, too; simple, unaffected, affectionate—dear me! I think I can see her now, in frilled trousers, bowling a hoop round the schoolhouse garden, and poor Ashurst pointing her out to me through the window! Poor Ashurst! dear me!"

Dr. Osborne pulled out a green silk pocket-handkerchief ornamented with orange spots, buried his face in it, and blew a loud and long note of defiance to the feelings which were very nearly making themselves manifest. When he reappeared to public gaze, Maud and Gertrude had entered the room, and the conversation took a different turn. The young ladies thought it a lovely morning, so fresh and nice, and they hoped they would have no more of that horrid winter, which they detested. Yes, they had seen dear Mrs. Ashurst, and she seemed much the same, if anything a little brighter than last night, but then she always was brighter in the mornings. Miss Ashurst had gone for a turn round the garden, her mother had said. And did uncle remember that they must go to Helmingham church that morning? Oh, Dr. Osborne didn't know that Hooton church was going to be repaired, and that there would not be service there for three or four Sundays. The snow had come through on to the organ, and when they went to repair the place they found that the roof was all rotten, and so they would have to have a new roof. And it was a pity, one of the young ladies thought, that while they were about it they didn't have a new clergyman instead of that deaf old Mr. Coulson, who mumbled so you couldn't hear him. And then Dr. Osborne told them they would be pleased at Helmingham church, for they had a new organist, Mr. Hall, and he had organised a new choir, in which Miss Gill's soprano and Mr. Drake's bass were heard to the greatest effect. Time to start was it not? Uncle must not forget the distance they had to walk. Yes, Maud would drive with Dr. Osborne with pleasure. She liked that dear old pony so much. She would be ready in an instant.

Marian went with the rest of the party to church, and sat with them immediately opposite the head-master's seat, where she had sat for so many years, and which was directly in front of the big school pew. What memories came over her as she looked across the aisle! Her eyes rested on the manly figure and the M.B. waistcoat of Mr. Benthall, who sat in the place of honour, but after an instant he seemed to disappear as in a dissolving view, and there came in his place a bowed and shrunken elderly man, with small white hands nestling under his ample cuffs, all his clothes seemingly too large for him, big lustrous eyes, pale complexion, and iron-grey hair. No other change in the whole church, save in that pew. The lame man who acted as a kind of verger still stumped up the pulpit-stairs and arranged the cushion, greatly to the horror of the preacher of the day, Mr. Trollope, who, being a little man, could hardly be seen in the deep pulpit, and whose soft, little voice could scarcely be heard out of the mass of wood and cotton velvet in which he was steeped to the ears. The butcher, who was also churchwarden and a leading member of the congregation, still applied to himself all the self-accusatory passages in the responses in the Psalms, and gave them out looking round at his fellow-parishioners in a tone of voice which seemed to say, "See what an infernal scoundrel I am, and how I delight in letting you know it!" The boys in the school were in the same places, many of them were the same boys, and the bigger ones, who had been in love with Marian when she lived among them, nudged each other as she came in, and then became scarlet from their clean collars to the roots of their freshly-pomatumed hair. Fresh faces nowhere but there. Change in no life but hers. Yes, as her eye rested on Mr. Creswell's solemn suit of black she remembered that life had changed also for him. And somehow, she could scarcely tell how, she felt comforted by the thought.

They left the church when the service was ended, but it was some time before they were able to start on their way home. Mr. Creswell came so seldom into Helmingham, that many of his old acquaintances saw him there for the first time since his wife's death, and came to offer their long-deferred condolence, and to chat over matters of local gossip. Marian, too, was always a welcome sight to the Helmingham people, and the women gathered round her and asked her about her mother's health,

and of their prospects, and when they were going to leave Woolgreaves; to all of which questions Marian replied with perfect self-possession and without giving her querists any real information.

At last they set out homeward. Maud and Gertrude started off at a rapid rate, and were soon out of sight. Mr. Creswell and Marian walked quickly on together, talking on various subjects. Mr. Creswell was the principal speaker, Marian merely answering or commenting on what he said, and, contrary to her usual custom, never originating a subject. Her companion looked at her curiously two or three times during their walk; her eyes were downcast, her forehead knit, and there was a generally troubled expression in her face. At length, when they had nearly reached their destination, and had turned from the high road into the Woolgreaves' grounds through a private gate, he said:

"You are strangely silent to-day, missy. Has anything happened to vex you?"

"To vex me? Nothing in the world. And it had not even struck me that I was particularly silent. It seems to me as though we had been talking ever since we left Helmingham."

"We? I, you mean. You have been almost monosyllabic in your replies."

"Have I? That was scarcely polite when you take the trouble to talk to me, my kind friend. The fact is that I have been in a kind of day-dream, I believe."

"About the future, Marian?" Mr. Creswell said this so earnestly that the girl looked up into his face. His eyes fell before hers as she said, steadily:

"No; about the past. The sight of the school pew, and of another person there in papa's place, called up all sorts of recollections, which I was revolving instead of listening to you. Oh, no!" she added, after a pause; "I love dreaming of the past, because, though it has here and there its dim hues and its one great and ineffaceable shadow of papa's loss, it was, on the whole, a happy time. But the future——" and she stopped suddenly, and shuddered.

"You have no pleasant anticipations of the future, Marian?" asked Mr. Creswell, in a lower tone than that in which he had hitherto spoken.

"Can you ask me—you who know me and know how we are circumstanced? I declare I——There! I'm always apt to forget myself when this subject is broached, and I speak out without thinking how uncalled for and ridiculous it is. Shall we walk on?"

"Not for an instant. I wanted to say a few words to you. I was talking to Dr. Osborne this morning about Mrs. Ashurst."

"About mamma?"

"The doctor said—what cannot fail to have struck you, Marian, who are so devotedly attached to your mother and so constantly in attendance on her—that a great change has recently come over her, and that she is much more feeble and more helpless than she used to be. You have noticed this?"

"I have indeed. Dr. Osborne is perfectly right. Mamma is very much changed."

"It is obviously necessary that she should not feel the loss of any little comfort to which she may have been accustomed. It is most essential that her mind should not be disturbed by any harassing fears as to what might become of you, after she was gone."

Marian was silent. Her face was deadly pale, and her eyes were downcast.

"There is only one way of securing our first object," continued Mr. Creswell, "and that is by your continuing in this house."

"That is impossible, Mr. Creswell. I have already explained to you the reason."

"Not impossible in one way, Marian—a way, too, that will secure the other object we have in view—your mother's peace of mind about you. Marian, will you remain in this house as its mistress—as my wife?"

It had come at last, the golden chance! She knew that he understood she had accepted him, and that was all. Mr. Creswell went on rapturously, telling her how his love had grown as he had watched her beauty, her charming intelligence, her discretion, and her worth; how he had been afraid she might think he was too old for her; how she should prove the warmth of his affection and the depth of his gratitude. All this he said, but she heard none of it. Her brain was running on her having at last achieved the position and the wealth, so long a source of bitter misery and despair to her. The end was gained; now life would indeed be something to her.

When they reached the house, Mr. Creswell wanted to go with her at once to Mrs. Ashurst's room; but Marian begged to be alone for a few moments, and parted with him at the door. As she passed through

the hall she saw a letter lying on the table addressed to her. It was the letter from Walter Joyce.

THE CHINESE FROM HOME.

TRAVELLING over the mountain trails almost anywhere in California, no matter how remote and solitary may be your route, you can scarcely fail to meet a curious figure—sloping-eyed, yellow-complexioned, with a shaved head, and pigtail carefully secured in a twisted knot behind; clad in a loose cloth or calico garment, half shirt, half jacket; trousers equally wide; a long bamboo pole over his shoulder, on either end of which, carefully balanced, are a sack of rice, a piece of pork, and a heterogeneous mass of mining tools; and, over all, the head of this strange individual is covered with a hat made of slips of bamboo, the brim of which equals in breadth a moderately sized umbrella. This is John Chinaman from home, finding his fortune. He always answers to the name of "John." He follows many ways of making his modicum of rice; and the representative of Chinese industry in this case is "Mining John." The white miners only allow him to labour at the poorer diggings, or at others which have been so well wrought over, as no longer to yield returns enough to satisfy their ideas as to wages. Accordingly, we find John at work in some remote locality which the stronger race has deserted, or which is too poor to tempt them to drive out the Chinese. In former times, this was frequently done; and in the old California newspapers reports of such outrages, or of meetings at which resolutions to do so were passed, are quite common. Some years ago I had occasion to pass a few days with some Chinese miners in the mountains. They numbered some twenty men, and occupied the deserted cabins of the miners who had formerly wrought in the locality. Every morning they would go down to the river side, and labour, steadily washing the gravel for gold until mid-day, when their slight meal of rice and vegetables was partaken of. At six o'clock, or thereabout, they stopped work for the day; and after carefully washing themselves in the river, they prepared supper. I was the only white there, and had made an arrangement with them about my meals. Accordingly my supper was first prepared: an office which I generally superintended, as they had, according to my observation, a nasty habit of incorporating rattlesnakes, frogs, slugs, and "such small deer," in their stews. After supper they would look to their little patches of water melons, cabbages, &c.; and their head man would talk to me about his daily life, or the province he had come from, and to which he hoped before long to return. The greater portion of them, however, after they had weighed out the proceeds of the day's labour and allotted each man his share by the aid of a suan-pan (a sort of miniature Babbage's calculating machine) would place themselves on their sleeping benches, put a little tray before them on which were all the materials for smoking, and soon drug themselves into a dreaming stupidity with the fumes of opium. Their huts were situated amid the most beautiful scenery, by the banks of a fine river, over which cataracts from the snow-capped mountains in the distance fell gurgling or roaring into the waters below. But for all this, on which I never tired of gazing, my hosts seemed to care little. They had no visitors, save an Indian on horseback now and then, who treated them very cavalierly and rarely dismounted. On Sundays they generally laid over from work, not from any religious motive, as they were Buddhists, but merely as a day of rest; and sometimes, if they had been more than ordinarily successful, one of them would go to the town or trading port, distant some ten miles, and buy some provisions and a bottle of a beverage called (I quote the label) "fine Old Tom," over which they made very merry for a few hours, playing a rude description of musical instrument sounding like a paralytic drum. They made, however, poor pay, generally not more than three or four shillings per diem each; though now and then they would come on a lucky pocket, and return in the evening grinning from ear to ear. The ground was, however, getting exhausted, and they were then talking of putting their household gods on the bamboo pole, and of removing to some more favoured locality which they had heard of. Go down into almost any town or village, and you will find John moving about with that same silent air of his. Here he generally follows the business of a laundryman. All through the by-streets and suburbs you can see his little cabin with a signboard informing that here lives —"Whang Ho. Washing and Ironing. Buttons sewed on;" and, peeping through the window, you see the proprietor busily at work clear starching, or ironing out the frills on the shirt bosom of probably the governor himself. He has a large pan full of lighted charcoal, which he uses as a "flat iron," and his mouth is full of water, which he most adroitly sprinkles over the linen in a fine shower. If you have any foul clothes, he will follow you home, take them away, and return them again in a day or two, charging about sixpence apiece for his trouble — bargaining, however, that he has not to find linen collars for paper ones which may have been dropped in. From the frequent warnings of washing John on this subject, I suspect that it is a custom of the colonial gentlemen, by which our friend has suffered in time past.

In the suburbs of every town agricultural John is busy at work, clearing the most unlikely pieces of ground, for the purpose of raising vegetables for the town market. These farmers, or rather market gardeners, are generally in companies of three or four; and if you pass that way, you can generally find one or other of the bucolic partnership driving the old cart and still older horse either from

or to market; if the latter is the case, it is usually filled with several casks of garbage, &c., which the industrious proprietor has bought or begged from the hotel keepers for feeding his pigs with.

Shopkeeping John is of a rather more aristocratic type. He still wears his country's dress, but it is of a fine material, and his shoes are of the best description, with the thickest of felt soles. He is also more particular about his person, and shaves his head with greater regularity than any of the labouring classes, much to the advantage of his personal appearance; for, however smart a Chinaman may look with his sprucely shaven head and neat pigtail, he looks a most atrocious scoundrel when the hair is beginning to grow down on his forehead. These little shops are chiefly patronised by their own nation, or by the pedlars who at all seasons —but more especially in the winter, when the outlying settlers find it inconvenient to come into the town for trifling purchases—perambulate the country with two huge hampers swung, as usual, on either end of a bamboo pole over the dealer's shoulder. Most obliging are these Chinese pedlars, and they always make a point, every Christmas, of making some little present to their chief customers and to the children. Most of the large storekeepers and wholesale dealers are men of education and refinement, standing well with the commercial community, but, except on rare occasions, never mingling in any society but that of their own people. A few of them keep cheap eating-houses or restaurants, frequented by sailors and others who have no objection to a dinner composed of very dubious materials, so long as its cost does not exceed a shilling or eighteenpence. Many of them are general servants, and in almost every house in North-West America the cook is a Chinaman. Female servants are rare, expensive, and most independent; so that our Asiatic friends have almost a monopoly of the kitchen. They get for such services from fifteen to twenty dollars per week, with board and lodging; while the young ladies who condescend to do "house helping" will demand from thirty to forty dollars, coupled with the bargain that they are not to brush boots, and are to have two nights a week, and the whole of Sunday, to themselves! They are not strong enough for labourers, but what they lack in muscle, they make up in industry. Accordingly, working for moderate wages, a large number of them are employed on public works, like the Pacific Railroad. Indeed it is principally owing to the assistance rendered by them that the rapid formation of the portion of the line already completed on the west side of the Rocky Mountains is due. They were also employed in considerable numbers on the Panama Railroad, but had to be discontinued, as they had a disagreeable habit, when the day was very warm, of fastening themselves by their pigtails to the "dump-cart," used to empty the earth into the Chagres river. They also employ themselves to some extent in catching and drying fish for the Chinese market. Every year they preserve several tons of the albicore, or ear-shell, for exportation to Canton, where it is used in a variety of manufactures. Even their signboards are painted by themselves, as it is dangerous to employ a jocular American, especially when under the influence of Mongehala whisky. Near San Francisco is a Chinese washing-house, surmounted by a signboard informing the passers-by that "ALL'S WELL—WE MAY BE HAPPY YET! YOU BET!" which no doubt the innocent proprietor supposes to be an eloquent announcement anent "washing and ironing." Most of their large firms' designations do not express the names of the owner or owners, but are symbolic. For instance, they mean "The wide-spreading firm," "The firm of the Flowery Land," and so on. All of their food, clothing, &c., with the exception of pork, boots, or mining tools, are imported from China. Some years ago they were detected carrying on a most lucrative business in importing a liquid called Chinese wine, which was discovered to be a very strong brandy, and, accordingly, notwithstanding its name, exciseable in the highest duties. If a Chinese dies in a foreign country, Mongol theologians seem to be agreed, that it will go hard with him in the after world unless his bones repose in the Flowery Land. Accordingly, the companies which bring the Chinese emigrants over to California are under contract to take them back again after a certain period, dead or alive. A Chinese funeral is a curious scene in San Francisco. A special burying-ground, called the Yerba Buena Cemetery, is set apart for Celestial repose. When carrying the body to the grave, a solemn individual scatters little slips of paper, with wise aphorisms from Confucius written on them, on either side; and on the lintels of their doorways are strips of red paper, on which are inscribed similar wise saws. On the grave is placed a roast fowl, some rice, and a bottle of "Chinese wine;" after which the mourners depart, never looking behind them. There is, however, another class of gentlemen who assist at the departed funeral, who are not so backward. A number of the rowdies of San Francisco, who are concealed near at hand, no sooner see the last of the mourners than they make a rush for the edibles and drinkables left for the benefit of Joss, and very soon make short work of them—Joss, no doubt, getting the credit. After lying some months in the grave, the bones are dug up, and carefully cleaned and polished with brushes, tied up, and put into little bundles, which are nicely labelled and stowed away, in a small tin coffin, in the particular hong or commercial house, which is responsible for them.* When a sufficient number of these interesting mementos have accumulated, a ship is chartered, and the coffins despatched with their contents back to Shanghae,

* I notice an advertisement in a California paper about a new earthenware coffin, combining the advantages of durability, cleanliness, and cheapness; which latter virtue will no doubt commend it to the Chinese undertakers. The editor, in a paragraphic puff, remarks "that any one having once used this coffin, would use no other!"

Canton, or Hong-Kong. I saw a vessel in San Francisco harbour laden with four hundred dead Chinese. On some of the silent mountain trails I have come across some of these lonely graves, only marked with a cleft stick, in which was stuck a slip of red paper, with the name of the deceased, followed by one of the sage maxims of Kungfutzee (Confucius), about the vanity of things earthly, which the subject of the cousin of the moon who lay below had already experienced in his own person.

Every year thousands of Chinese are entering to supply the place of those who leave, so that instead of decreasing, their numbers are increasing with the country. Nobody likes John over much, and some of the baser sort have the most determined enmity to him. The storekeepers don't like him, because he deals with his own people, though they forget that he takes nothing from them, and sometimes does put something in their pockets for mining tools. Beside, all John's dealings are for ready money, for though he may haggle long enough about the price yet he gets no credit, though worse men may. The labourer doesn't like him, for he works for lower wages than he. This is a favourite subject of growling with these lazy loafers, as they doze away in bar-rooms with their feet on the top of the stove. Yet there is room for all of them, and the Chinese are only taken because white men can't be got. Politicians don't take him up, because he doesn't vote, and therefore is of no account in municipal or state elections, and is not to be conciliated, while the newspaper editor, who ought to put in a good word for him, is very lukewarm on the subject, for John does not advertise, while his detractors do. Accordingly, poor John is kicked and abused with very little chance of redress. He is hunted out of every good mining locality, and he may think himself well off if he is not robbed and has his pigtail cut off as a lesson to him, when of course the local paper will be sure to repeat the time-honoured joke about a "long *tale* being cut short." Formerly rowdies thought it good fun to catch a Chinaman and cut his tail off, though, as every one who knows that people is aware, he would as soon you took his life, as he is an outcast among his co-religionists until his "hair grows." Some of them are Christians, and have given up this method of hairdressing, but these are rare exceptions. I am glad, however, to say that of late years the California legislature have made it a penal offence to cut off a Chinaman's pigtail; at the same time I never heard of anybody being punished, though there are plenty of pigtails lopped off. In the streets he is openly insulted. In Christian California I have seen a poor harmless Chinese stoned by boys until he was bleeding, hardly one being manly enough to take his part. I have heard of others after whom ruffians would hound their dogs, while the poor persecuted man was torn and bleeding, and the law touched his assailants not. The law passes acts against him, taxes him heavily as he enters, taxes him for making his living, and taxes him at every turn. It is quite a perquisite of the local official, this Chinese taxation, and he is either a very just, or, by no means, a "*smart*" man, who cannot make a revenue out of the unfortunate Celestial.

Even the Digger Indian, taking example from his superiors (?), persecutes and robs John also, if he finds him in the mountains; and as our poor friend will do anything rather than fight, he comes off very poorly indeed. John, it must be acknowledged, has an insuperable objection to paying taxes, notwithstanding his being in early life accustomed to be "squeezed" by a mandarin in his own country, and he will often take to the mountains when he hears of the sheriff coming his way. In Southern Oregon, where nearly all the diggings are occupied by Chinese, the sheriff, in order to take them by strategy, has to send a few deputies in the guise of miners, with packs of blankets on their backs, who surprise John before he has time to escape, and if he shows any symptoms of resistance, with a revolver at his head, force him to "pungle down the dust." I remember hearing a few years ago of some Chinese who, expecting the tax-gatherer, went and took refuge in a cave which they had bribed a digger Indian to show them. After their guide had taken their money, he went off to the sheriff, and receiving another bribe, informed him where they were hiding. A fire was kindled at the mouth of the cave, and the poor fellows, fairly trapped, had to crawl out one by one, and to pay their money without loss of time; they never think of the wretched economy of all this, and of the loss of time being more than all the tax amounts to, but only of the sum which has to be squeezed out of their hoard.

Yet John is not such a bad fellow—even when from home. Though rarely mingling in general society, yet on high occasions he is most hospitable. Once a year in Southern Oregon the Chinese give a grand dinner, to which they invite the neighbouring storekeepers and other friends. These storekeepers almost live by the Chinese, as there are no native dealers there. It is amusing to see the stock in trade of one of these 'cute Yankees, who is possibly a pillar of the church—Chinese gods, papers to burn in the temple of Joss, Chinese suan-pans, almanacks, novels, medicines, pickled cabbage, slugs, &c., possibly the whole superintended by a Chinese clerk. These entertainments were, however, greatly eclipsed by the grand dinner they gave to Mr. Burlinghame, at present chief ambassador to the treaty powers, on his way out to China as United States' ambassador, and some time previously to Mr. Colfax, the Speaker of Congress, on the occasion of his visit to San Francisco in 1865. It was given by the five great hongs, or mercantile companies, of San Francisco, and was quite unique in its way, Chinese dishes and European being both presented. Of the former I counted some one hundred and sixty-five, but there must have been many more. They included every possible delicacy—sharks' fins, bird-nest soup, young bamboo, scorpions' eggs,

&c. &c. &c., eaten with chopsticks, with dessert about the beginning of the feast, including tea, which is said to have cost fifty dollars per pound. Between the courses the hosts and guests left the table, and were entertained by a Chinese opera, consisting of a one-stringed fiddle, a sort of gong, and something looking like a mud turtle, on the back of which they beat. They are exceedingly industrious, and if a Chinaman makes only half a dollar a day, he will save half of it. If he is well off he lives well, but still saves. At their new year (in February) all accounts must be settled up, otherwise good reason must be shown why he should continue in business, or hold further commercial dealings. Most of them speak a sort of broken English—known in Canton as "Pigeon English," and all are exceedingly anxious to learn. Still, notwithstanding all their industry, they will occasionally come to grief, and land within the interior of the Californian Whitecross Prison. A Chinese, named Ah Sam, who kept the "Lord Nelson Restaurant," in Victoria, Vancouver Island, became bankrupt, and was ordered to file a schedule of his assets. Not knowing the names of his customers, he had entered short descriptions of them in his ledger, and when he entered court, he had nothing more than the following to show. It was given me by his solicitor as a legal curiosity:

	dols.	cents.
A butcher owes	18	
Captain of a schooner	50	
Cook in a ship-galley	8	
Red shirt man	27	
Man comes late (a Printer?)	10	
Cap man	8	50
Lean man, white man	20	
Fat Frenchman	30	62½
Captain, tall man	20	
French old man	8	
Whiskers man	18	37½
Blacksmith	49	
Barkeeper	5	
Workman	5	
Whiskers man's friend	6	25
Double blanket man	6	50
Little short man	10	
Double blanket man's friend	15	
Lame leg man	40	
Fat man	9	25
Old workman	8	
Red whiskers	7	50
Steamboat man	18	
Indian Ya	4	62½
Dick make coal shoveller	28	
Yea Yap Earings	25	
Flower pantaloon man	16	
Shoemaker gone to California	15	62½
A man—butcher's friend	39	
Stable man	16	
Get tight* man	7	

The last entry the Commissioner decided was of much too general a character to allow of the slightest hope of fixing the debt upon any one in particular.

In San Francisco there are five great hongs, or merchant companies, called the Yung-wo, the Sze-yap, the Sam-yap, the Yan-wo, and Wing-yeung companies. These companies have large wooden buildings in the town, where they not only carry on business, but lodge and board all the people attached to their companies when in the city. There are also benevolent associations to take care of the sick of their own people. There are no Chinese beggars in San Francisco, and that nation alone has no representatives in the public hospital. Most of the Chinese on the Pacific coast come to California under contract to one or other of these companies, engaged at a low rate of wages (generally about eight dollars per month), and these companies again let out their labour in various ways. This is essentially the coolie system, and I think there need be little doubt but that this prevails in California. The labourers are said to be very faithful to their contracts. They have never yet learned to use the food of the people among whom they live. Rice is still the great staple, with sometimes a little pork; and on high occasions, ducks and other fowls. He is not, however, at all particular in his commissariat. Rats, mice, and even their mortal enemy the cat, is not safe from John's omnivorous stomach. I have often heard the miners venting curses both loud and deep on the prowling Chinese, who had cleared the "creek" of cats. Their houses have a peculiar faint, sickening odour, perfectly indescribable. A friend of mine used to declare that they smell of nothing but effete civilisation!

I have said so much about John's honesty that it may not be out of place to close this article with a few remarks upon the disreputable side of the Chinese character on the Pacific, albeit some have been of opinion that there is only one side, and that the shady one. It cannot but be expected, where thousands of men are continually arriving, but that some rogues will slip in, more especially when the labourers are recruited from the notoriously scoundrelly coolie population of Chinese cities. Some of them are most adroit fowl thieves, and will clear a fowl-yard between sunset and sunrise. They rarely attempt burglary, and chiefly lay themselves out for the "sneaking line." As they pass in single file along the street, with a basket on either end of a bamboo pole, loose inconsidered trifles are speedily transferred from shop-doors to these receptacles, the thief marching on as innocently as possible. Some few years ago they put a considerable amount of base coin into circulation. They were also accused of "sweating" the coin—shaking it up in a bag for some hours, and then burning the bag to obtain the few grains which clung to the fibres of the cloth. They had a still more ingenious method of swindling, and that was to split open the twenty-dollar gold pieces, adroitly extract the inside, and then filling it with some metal of equal weight, close the two sides again. So neatly was this done that the union was not detected until some time after the trick had been in successful operation, and then only in the Mint at Philadelphia. They are notorious gamblers, and expend a large proportion of their earnings in this manner. In San Fran-

* Drunk.

cisco and all the large towns there are regular gambling-houses; and in the mining camps they spend a great portion of their leisure in playing—generally for "pice," or other low stakes. The keepers of these houses must be wealthy, as they invariably pay the large fines which are sometimes inflicted on them when detected infringing the act passed against gambling-houses. They seem to have no idea of the binding nature of a legal oath, and accordingly their evidence is always received most cautiously. In the courts of law they are usually sworn by breaking a plate, cutting the neck off a fowl, or by burning a piece of paper before them. They do not intermarry with the whites, and few of the labourers bring wives with them. There are upwards of fifteen hundred of their women on the Pacific coast, one thousand of whom are in San Francisco, and nearly all of them are of the vilest class. The children are tolerably numerous in San Francisco, and are pretty little creatures, with their sparkling black eyes and queer little queues behind, eked out with green or scarlet silk. Suicides are very common among them, the Chinese seeming to care nothing for life. They are mostly Buddhists of a very corrupted type, though a few Christians are found among them. The former have a fine temple in San Francisco, and in every house is a little family temple, or Joss-house, before which papers are burnt and offerings made at stated times. With the exception of gambling and opium smoking, they have few amusements. In San Francisco they support a curious little theatre, where the music is a demoniacal band of gongs; and the same play seemed to have been going on for several years when I last visited it, and is not yet finished. Kite-flying is a favourite out-of-doors amusement. Chinese kites, made in the form of butterflies and birds, which give out a singing noise, are in great demand among the youth of the Pacific coast. Occasionally, on a Sunday, a few of them will have an "out" on horseback, or in a waggon. On these occasions some of them dress in European clothes, and the horsemanship and general display is a sight for gods and men! Except on the great festival of their new year, you see very little dissipation among them. These holidays generally last three or four days, when all business is suspended, and you must wear foul linen until John your washerman has finished his jollification. The morning of the first day of the holidays is ushered in by a loud display of crackers and other fireworks, and before nine o'clock the streets are covered with red papers. Sometimes, to the great delight of young California, a whole caskful is let off at once. A Chinese merchant told me that it generally costs about one thousand pounds each new year for fireworks alone; and some houses in the city will expend from sixty to eighty pounds for this item alone.

During this season no allusion to anything sad, such as death, sickness, losses in business, or any misfortune, is tolerated by any one. Every sentiment must be of hope, good will, and good cheer. Every true subject of the Flowery Land does his best; and the attire of some of the wealthy Chinese far exceeds in cost the dresses of the richest of the whites. A sable cape, silk trousers, and embroidered silk jacket, make a very expensive turn out. The greetings and salutations are very ceremonious, and all imaginary blessings are included in the interchange of good wishes. Upon almost all the stores, places of business, and tenements of the Chinese, may be seen during the holiday season, sundry strips of red paper pasted up, inscribed with Chinese characters. They are usually five in number, and are recognised in common parlance as "charms," but among those familiar with the usages of these people as the "five blessings." Each is inscribed with a separate blessing, such as health, wealth, friends, long life, and posterity. At this period they also visit the temple, observing certain religious rites, and making offerings of roast pigs and other dainties to their idols, which are afterwards withdrawn and eaten at their own feasts. The first four days at the beginning of each new year are appropriated for the lower classes, and thirty days for the gentry, as a time of feasting in China, but on the Pacific coast the custom is somewhat modified. Some of the wealthy Chinese keep up a round of festivities for two or three weeks, while the special holiday season may be said to expire at the end of three or four days. They have also other holidays in the course of the year. About these times, indigestion and other ills trouble John, and the doctor has to be called in. There are many of these professional gentlemen on the Pacific coast, grave looking old fellows, but generally arrant rogues. Deer-horns when in the "velvet" are eagerly bought, being esteemed a valuable medicament by the Chinese. The gall of a bear is valued at its weight in gold, and the rare Albino deer is equally prized.

In 1864, there was quite a furor in San Francisco about a Chinese doctor, whose consulting-rooms were besieged by the élite of the city. His success was said to consist in careful regimen, his medicines being very harmless. He used, however, to insure attention to diet and general conduct by laying down strict rules, to diverge from which, he informed his patients, would cause certain death to ensue from the medicine. He was of a fine appearance, richly dressed, and spoke through an Englishman as an interpreter. His lionisation lasted a few weeks, and after that he gradually dropped into oblivion, to make way for some other sensation. On the whole, the rapidly increasing Chinese population is an advantage to the American States and territories on the Pacific, as well as the British colonies further north. They cultivate ground which no one else will, and work gold mines disregarded by the whites. They are consumers to some extent of European and American manufactures, and whether or no, their merchants pay taxes and import duties. On the

whole, though kicked and abused, simply because they are harmless, inoffensive, and weak, and do not retaliate on the ruffians who maltreat them, as would any one else, they are an industrious people who, if they do not become citizens, yet do not interfere in any way in politics, and in proportion to their numbers, give less trouble to the law than any one else, and are therefore deserving of every encouragement.

SCOTCH SINCERITY.

I said, to one who picked me up
Just slipping from a rock,
"I'm not much good at climbing, eh?"
"No, sirr, ye arrrn't," said Jock.

I showed him then a sketch I'd made
Of rough hill-side and loch;
"I'm not an artist, mind," I said:
"No, sirr, ye arrrn't," quoth Jock.

A poem next I read aloud—
One of my num'rous stock;
"I'm no great poet," I remarked:
"No, sirr, ye arrrn't," said Jock.

Alas! I fear I well deserved
(Although it proved a shock),
In answer to each modest sham,
That plain retort from Jock.

TO THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

THE REPORTS OF A VOLUNTEER COMMISSIONER.

SIX IN NUMBER.

Report the Fifth.

Travelling for some distance in a north-easterly direction, Your Commissioner was landed at the door of a very large public-house. The stucco of this building had a greasy appearance; but the paint of its doors was worn in a manner suggestive of much friction, and a number of thirsty idlers were hanging about before it. The place looked as little like the entrance of a theatre as might be, and indeed was merely the ante-chamber or vestibule to a theatre. The wicket-gate leading to the temple of the drama was a little beyond the main building, and was approached by a dim court. A narrow passage, not so clean as it might be, led from the entrance gate into another court, larger and dimmer than the first. A platform for dancing—on which, on this occasion, the rain stood in pools—occupied this festive space, and, as well as the eye could make out in the darkness, it was surrounded by arbours or boxes for the consumption of refreshment. Beset by visions of acute rheumatism and chronic bronchitis, Your Commissioner hurried over the watery waste, and found himself in the stalls of the Dramatic Temple of the Bird of Jove.

It should be observed of the stalls at this theatre, that they are in every respect unlike the stalls at the theatres previously visited. There are not many of them; they are not reserved; they are cheap; they are not comfortable. Their occupants are, likewise, eminently unlike the occupants of the stalls in the West. In the West, Your Commissioner, laughing aloud at the witticisms of the clown, or what not, was concerned to find at least fifty elegant persons gazing at him with looks of surprise, not unmixed with horror. In the East, suspicious glances are cast upon him who remains unmoved by what is passing on the stage, and ominous whispers may reach him referring darkly to "pride" and "swells." In the stalls at the West, the only remark made by an occupant of a stall, in any way relating to the proceedings on the stage, which reached Your Commissioner's ears, proceeded from a gentleman, young but used up, who occupied the next seat. This individual was accompanied by a friend, who might have been his twin brother. They were both faultlessly dressed; their white ties were of precisely the same form and size; the flowers in their button-holes might have grown on the same stalk; their shirts were of the same pattern; each youth's collar stood up round his neck, and drooped under his chin, as if the starch had run short, at precisely the same angles. There was no difference in the parting of their hair; their foreheads sloped in unison. All that these young bucks could find to say, touching the entertainments in progress, was said at a critical moment of the pantomime, when the greater part of the audience was in a state of hilarity. The remarks were not otherwise brilliant than as signs of life in objects apparently inanimate. One used-up twin said, glancing with a contemptuous expression at your appreciative Commissioner: "Doosid stoopid all this;" the other used-up twin friend replying "Yas," the conversation dropped.

In the East, things were different. Remarks flew about freely all the evening. They were in general commendatory, but if any one had a low opinion of what was being done for his amusement, he had no hesitation in expressing himself, without reserve.

The theatre was crowded—so crowded that when the performance flagged a little—and it did flag a little sometimes—the audience struggled a good deal to get more room. But, when matters mended on the stage, or when the symphony of a popular song was struck up, the public, after a cry of expectant joy, settled down in strict

and decorous silence. The cracking of nuts, like minute guns at sea, alone interrupted the proceedings. The amount of nuts consumed, was amazing. It appeared as if this refreshment had peculiar charms for the frequenters of the Bird, for every man, woman, and child, seemed to consider a pocketful of Barcelonas quite indispensable. Possibly the dry nature of these provisions was intended as a whet, or relish, to the more genial entertainment presented on the stage. The pantomime might not be called a good one, but was presented with care, and perfect propriety, and nothing in it of an offensive nature could be pointed out by the most captious critic. A most excellent and humorous gymnastic pantomimist, the delight of his audience, is the mainstay of this house, and has probably no superior in his own line.

The pantomime was a long one, and when Your Commissioner emerged from the theatre, he found the dreary space he had crossed before, occupied by promenaders regardless of damp. They were about to dance: not, however, on the sloppy boards, but in a large room adjoining: to which an extra charge for admission was made, and which appeared to fill well. An individual with a weighing machine had planted himself in a dry spot in the centre of the wet platform and implored the public in piteous accents to try their weights — an invitation responded to by none. Possibly the individual thought that some one might be curious to know how much weight he had lost in the theatre, where the heat was extreme.

Your Commissioner next visited Shoreditch. It is his deliberate opinion that Shoreditch on a damp night is not a pleasing thoroughfare. He found in it, much mud, many public-houses, several tripe shops, and a few "penny gaffs." Cheap tailors have laid violent hands on a large number of the houses in this very unpleasant neighbourhood, and, from behind acres of plate glass, offer amazing garments at surprising prices. Here, the proprietors of baked-potato cans are not as their brethren in other parts of London, forasmuch as it is the fashion for a Shoreditch potato-can to be decorated and illumined by three enormous lamps, of the shape, and nearly of the size, of the ordinary street lamp. Probably the pie and potato interests here find it impossible to compete with the fried fish and other cooked provision shops, which abound, without going in for splendour and paraffine. A considerable number of the native population do not appear imbued with the fine arts, to the extent of having their manners softened, or themselves prevented from becoming ferocious. Pugilists' public-houses are numerous. Gentlemen who are occasionally to be seen flying from race-courses, bleeding, half torn to pieces, and pursued by unpaid backers of horses, have their Welch fastnesses not far from the Great Eastern Railway Station. Cheap photographers swarm. Everything for sale is ticketed. All sorts of articles of dress, ornament, and refreshment, are displayed on barrows along the margin of the pavement, and hoarse cries of vendors rend the air.

Pursuing his way among these surroundings on a very wet evening, Your Commissioner looked forward with an evil eye to the theatre he was about to visit. He pictured it to himself as a squalid, dirty, inconvenient house; where the audience would be wretched and the performance worse; where the arrangements would be bad, and the ventilation nil. He had serious thoughts of giving it up and turning back. Duty, however, nailed his colours to the mast, and virtue was rewarded.

Large convenient approaches from Shoreditch lead, by lobbies equally convenient, into one of the finest and largest theatres in London. Handsome in shape, thoughtful in arrangement, excellently conducted, this theatre is a model place of public entertainment. From every part of it, an excellent view of the stage can be had; the comfort of the audience is well cared for; there is everywhere ample space, and to spare, and the ventilation is perfect. There is an enormous pit, divided into two classes; there are large galleries, here called upper and lower circles; there is an elegant and comfortable balcony, corresponding to a West-end dress circle; and there is a sufficiency of private boxes all round the house. It is really a surprising theatre. If it could be taken up bodily and set down in the Strand, it would mightily astonish the playgoers of the West. It was nearly full on the night of Your Commissioner's visit; not quite full, but this is not surprising when it is considered that it can seat five thousand three hundred persons, and that there is, besides, standing room for many more. The audience were very quiet and appreciative, and the pantomime afforded extreme delight. It was liberally and judiciously put upon the stage, and, in accordance with the general custom, abounded in princes and in ballet. Your Commissioner is unable to report that he has any fault

to find with the costumes of any of the dramatic company. Neither was there anything in the proceedings of the clowns calling for extraordinary remark.

Your Commissioner deems it needless to multiply examples of his experience. In Hoxton, he found another great Theatre, admirably designed, built, and managed. Several pantomimes are on his list; but one was so like another, that his Shoreditch report may stand for all. They were inoffensive, decorous, and carefully done.

Report the Sixth.

Your Commissioner's researches in the region of burlesque remain. He is unable to approach this portion of his subject with any great degree of satisfaction. Your Commissioner, yielding to pressure from hungry boxkeepers, became the purchaser of several "books of the burlesque." Bitterly does he regret the shillings thus expended: tearfully does he caution the public against so fatal an error. He offers the solemn warning from the depths of his dismal experience: Listen, but do not read. As burlesque was a dozen years ago, so is it now. The same jokes, the same situations, the same business, occasionally the same stories. With each successive repetition the thing appears to have become weaker, until a point has been reached beyond which Your Commissioner trusts that the force of feebleness can no further go. As the burlesque writers have, in most cases, gone to the Music Hall for their music, so occasionally they appear to have adopted the style of the gentlemen who provide words for the "comiques." Your Commissioner, but for his regard for your Lordship's feelings, could quote from his collection of books of burlesques, effusions here and there, in comparison with which even the ditty of Tommy Dodd, or Up in a Balloon, can claim a sort of literary merit. This deplorable state of things appears to be, in some way, the Nemesis inseparable from burlesque, and not the result of incompetence in the authors, inasmuch as many of those gentlemen have done, and still do, real good work in other departments of art, dramatic and otherwise.

Burlesques undoubtedly rely largely on the introduction, by the lady members of the company, of very vigorous dancing; the flourishing of green satin boots is a most important element in their success. But the "break-down" and the "walk round", though almost always slangy and occasionally disagreeable, cannot with any fairness or reason be called indecent. There are very many more of such dances than was once the case; and many charming young ladies figure in tights and little boots, who have nothing whatever to do with the subject matter of the burlesque, until the particular scene occurs in which their dancing powers are called into action. They are engaged, in fact, to dance and to look well. At the New Goahead Theatre this matter particularly impressed Your Commissioner, and it became distinctly clear to him that the burlesque at this house is a "leg piece." But leg pieces are not the invention of the present epoch, and Your Commissioner has faint remembrance of an Opera House near the Haymarket, *in* which, and an Omnibus-Box *from* which, such things have been seen ere now by some of your Lordship's friends. However glad he would be to have a little more humour and good acting, and a little less reliance on bold dancing and costume, he does not think the present state of things justificatory of any special hysterical outbreak in behalf of the public morals.

That the true spirit of burlesque is extinct, and that the theatre possesses no artists capable of presenting a burlesque picture, carefully and humorously touched, Your Commissioner denies. The performance of a travesty of one of the masterpieces of German romanticism, some few months back, was marked by an extraordinary whimsicality and drollery on the part of the gentleman principally concerned, and by a refined humour and most captivating grace and elegance on that of the lady, that would alone have been sufficient refutation of any such statement. Neither has the excellent fooling attending the adventures of one Captain Crosstree escaped Your Commissioner's grateful notice. Some of our best comedians occasionally play in burlesque, and, though frequently placed in circumstances unworthy of their powers, they have the Art to bring out good results from unpromising materials. And it is a noteworthy fact that of the early members of the excellent company which made the Feathers Theatre the resort of lovers of comedy, two at least began their London stage career in burlesque, and for some time were not suspected by their audiences to possess any higher order of talent. Again, Your Commissioner is of opinion that the public quickly find out what is good, and that, irrespective of the number of legs on view, they will go and see it.

Your Commissioner, to sum up, begs to state that he has observed the skirts of

the ladies of the ballet. Some were voluminous; some were scanty; some were short; some—not many—long. Some were stiff and expansive; others had to make up in spangles, what they lacked in starch. Some were whisked about in conventional ballet figures; others, passed across the stage, or manœuvred on it in marches and processions. Of the ladies wearing these various costumes, some were elderly. Those figured in the background. Some were mere children. Active young women bounded over the stage, and threaded their corkscrew path among their humbler sisters, apparently oblivious of all else; and little mites of girls danced their infantine boleros close to the footlights, and with eyes fixed immovably on the conductor's baton. Princes, also of all ages (and some of remarkably prepossessing appearance), have been passed in review by Your Commissioner. Stout princes, lean princes, tall princes, short princes; princes in mauve, in red, in blue, in green; princes differing from one another in every respect, except that they were almost all clad in doublet and hose, and that they had all been to a Music Hall or two, and had brought away some of the popular airs of the day. All the princes danced; hornpipe, clog dance, break-down, champion jig, or what not.

Your Commissioner now, recalling his experiences, begs to say that he is unable to report the existence of stage indecency, such as is suggested by your Lordship's circular. If the ordinary stage dress of a ballet girl, and of a stage prince, be improper, then the stage swarms with improprieties, and has so swarmed for many years. If it be asserted that less attention is given to public decency, in the costumes in question, at the present time, than has for years and years been the case, Your Commissioner begs totally to deny the fact. If it be intended to be conveyed that exhibitions are commonly to be witnessed in the pantomimes and burlesques of the day, which a man should think twice about taking the ladies of his family to see, Your Commissioner, with all respect for the remarks in the press and "other sources," on which your Lordship's strictures are founded, respectfully but uncompromisingly and firmly says that it is not so.

Certain managers, plunging eagerly into print, and commenting on your Lordship's circular, assumed that the facts were as your Lordship's informants stated them, and immediately fell foul of the public, by whom improprieties were encouraged. If by this it were meant that the public taste is becoming so vitiated and debased as to call for questionable exhibitions on the boards of a theatre, Your Commissioner enters against any such hardy representation his energetic protest. Any manager who may think it well to try the experiment, and to pander to this supposed depraved taste, will soon have ample leisure to meditate on the vanity of earthly things in the seclusion of Whitecross-street.

The really disgraceful exhibition of a low French dancing company at a London theatre last year, might have called justly for your Lordship's attention. It was so little relished by the audience, that it speedily had to be transplanted to more congenial soil. The lesson has probably been taken to heart, for nothing of the sort has been attempted this year.

Your Commissioner thinks that your Lordship may take heart of grace, and that, after all, the public may be trusted. At the same time he thinks it will do no harm to any one, either before or behind the footlights, to know that your Lordship's department is on the alert, and that any breach of public decorum will be sternly repressed. But he submits, in justice to all concerned, that on the next occasion on which your Lordship deems it necessary to interfere, you should point out exactly what it is that has moved your Lordship to action, and should take the earliest opportunity of proving to the offending manager that the Lord Chamberlain's rebuke is no brutum fulmen. So will the public learn what it is that they ought to avoid, and so will innocent managers, untouched by your Lordship's anger, reap the reward of their virtuous actions.

WILLS AND WILL MAKING.

Of all the dark corners into which the human soul retires when it has some doubtful business on hand, some of the very darkest and most unpleasant are found to be those selected for making a will. Think of the thousands of furious fathers "cutting off" their children for some marriage disapproved of; giving out that they are asserting paternal rights—in reality, revenging themselves because of thwarted ambition and greedy hopes. Think of the line of old sinners darning up their wicked lives with bequests to hospitals and charities, to which they would not give a shilling till what they have is no longer theirs. Think of the lurid death-bed scenes, the act delayed until almost too late; the cormorants crowding round, the lawyers and clergy waiting the interval of in-

different consciousness, the pen guided, and the faltering signature. Think of the "low comedian" will-maker, who chuckles over services invited all his life, over the hopes held out, the significant word dropped, and who revels in the picture of the day when the will is read which gives all to one whom he has never seen, and disappoints the parasites. What would he not give to be present at that most exquisite of scenes? By wills and will-making hangs a cloud of the most intensely dramatic elements, and it is no wonder that so great a master of the human comedy as Balzac, should have played again and again on these disagreeable but seducing chords, and have loved to create misers, and hungry and greedy heirs. The philosophy and interest of the study is founded on the most absorbing and genuine situations; for the will-maker is put to a curious test, and *must* face his own meaner passions and interests. He must make up his mind to deal with the matter, as if he himself was out of the question. He must deal with himself as though he were dead, though he does not like to do so. So with the attitude of others, more or less dependent, towards the will-maker. A penetrating cynic will laugh to see how the best and most virtuous, once this magnet is held towards them, find themselves unconsciously playing a new part.

We may think, also, what a real touchstone this will-making becomes as a test for true righteousness. The complacently just, deceiving themselves, cannot there deceive others. The thin veil is torn off from their motives; an act of "strict justice" is seen at once to be the gratification of intolerance, or spite, or revenge. Proctors declare that thousands of wills are being destroyed and have been destroyed. The decent, virtuous gentleman who would cut off his right hand, as he thinks, sooner than commit an offence akin to those for which lower creatures are placed in the dock, sometimes mistakes the fear of detection and disgrace, the want of *suitable* temptation, for inflexible principle; and the lucky and respectable heir, who has come into possession through no will being found, often has discovered among the papers, or between the leaves of a book, the fatal stray sheet which will deprive him of all. It is certain that hundreds have succumbed to this terrible test. The most perfect instance of the victory of principle is the Irish one, told by Sir Bernard Burke, and which deserved a crown of virtue indeed, and would have had public recognition from any other state than our own.

A Dublin barrister named Carroll was brought up in the confidence that he was to inherit an estate of a relative, which he managed, and which was indeed his only prospect of support. The relative died, and he found himself in possession. Some dispute arising with a tenant about a lease, he came to Dublin to search, and after much trouble found it, with a whole bundle of others, in an old trunk at the top of the stairs. Going over them at night, a paper dropped out, which proved to be a will, leaving the whole away to an illegitimate daughter, whom the Carrolls were at that moment supporting. The luckless barrister did not hesitate. He was alone. It was a tiny scrap. There was a candle beside him. His first act was to consult a barrister as to whether it was a legally drawn will; he owed *that*, at least, to his family. He was told it was. He took the mail, went down to his family, and placed the paper in the hands of the girl who had become entitled. For him it was literally beggary. He soon after died, and with difficulty some friends procured for his wife the matronship of a jail. It is impossible to give enough credit to this noble act, which exhibited an act of religion in its purest shape, precipitating every particle of motive.

One of the most curious features in this "Revenge by Will," is the many times it has deceived the ends of the will-makers. A very remarkable instance occurred not many years ago in a family known to the writer. It has an air of compensation at the end, quite suitable to a drama.

A gentleman of large fortune was married to a lady of some attractions. For a time they lived very happily; but soon a disagreeable and ill-conditioned temper began to be exhibited in the husband. This later turned to a positive dislike, quite undeserved on the wife's side, and which deepened into a malignant hatred. Her forbearance and temper carried on matters with tolerable smoothness for some years, when the husband was seized with an illness that proved fatal, and he went out of the world in the old ill-conditioned way that he had lived. Her friends were congratulating themselves on this release, and as she had but a slender settlement, it was known that all his large fortune must come to her. When his will, however, was opened, it was found that everything was left away from her—artful and ingenious devices had been used to deprive her of the smallest article of property—and, with an almost diabolical malignity, a last blow was given: "And I make this disposition *for a reason that she herself best knows.*" This scandalous insinuation only recoiled on the head of the testator; for her friends knew her character too well, and the charitable set down this ungoverned hatred to something akin to insanity. The lady accepted her lot with great sweetness and resignation. Not long after, a relative, who was an eminent barrister, happened to be talking to one of the witnesses to the will in the street. Suddenly a gentleman passed them.

"There's a coincidence," said the eminent barrister. "There's your fellow-witness, A.B."

"Oh, was he?" said the other carelessly. "I didn't know."

"*What!*" exclaimed the barrister.

A question or two, and it came out that the two witnesses had signed at different times.

We may conceive the delight with which the barrister—a sympathising friend—received this news. The will collapsed of itself, like a crazy house, without even a legal proceeding; and the lady, like a heroine, was triumphantly restored to her rights and honours. One might almost wish that her baffled lord had been

allowed one peep from his grave, to know the failure of his malignant efforts.

It would be a curious study to analyse the feelings of those odd testators when, pen in hand, they sat down to dispose of their own remains, after some truly fantastic fashion. There is a whole line of these eccentrics; indeed, they are to be expected in the ordinary course of nature. It would seem that with this unbounded power of disposition comes also a sort of fitful fancy akin to the caprices of a sick person, or it may be ascribed to an exaggerated and morbid sense of self-importance. However this may be, the instances of this shape of extravagance are innumerable. There have been legions of testators insanely and jealously solicitous lest the mortal tenement they left behind them should go down to the clay, or come in contact with worms or clods; and yet the same persons, had they to suffer amputation of a leg or an arm, could scarcely be uneasy as to what was done with their severed limb. The tourist both in England and Ireland, travelling along by-roads, is sometimes pointed out a house with a peculiarly-shaped roof, and is then told a story of some oddity of a Dives who had left, to the great torment of his executors, some very strict and minute directions as to the putting away of his body above ground in the roof. Sometimes this arrangement is to be accounted for through the observances of some fancied legal condition, as where a lease has been granted for so long a time "as the lessee shall be over ground;" and though the law-courts would have very soon shown that this was not a carrying out of the spirit of the agreement, the baffled heirs might not have cared to take the trouble of making a new disposition of the remains, and would have left them where they were.

About the year seventeen hundred and twenty-four, people who passed by Stevenage had a bill thrust into their hands inviting them to visit an old hovel that once belonged to a certain Henry Trigg, and "where," added the bill, "his remains are still upon the rafters of the west-end of the hovel, and may be viewed by any traveller who may think it worthy of notice." The former tenant of the remains thus disposed of, had made his last will almost entirely, it would seem, with a view to secure the gratification of this peculiar idiosyncrasy. He began it with that sort of complacent and even jubilant strain of piety, which is common, however, to all testators. "I, Henry Trigg, grocer," he wrote, "being very infirm and weak in body, but of perfect sound mind and memory, praised be God for it, do give my soul to God; as to my body, I commit it to the west-end of my hovel, to be decently laid there upon a floor erected by my executors, upon the purlins, nothing doubting, but that at the great resurrection I will receive the same again."

All his property, with the exception of some slight legacies, he bequeathed to his brother, a clergyman, provided he strictly carried out this condition; if he should be disinclined to do so, it was to go to a second brother on the same condition; should he refuse, it passed to a nephew on the same terms. The whole wound up with a number of bequests, varying in amount from a guinea downwards to one shilling, and even the shilling and guinea were not to pass to the legatee until three years after his decease.

Some of these cases are, of course, due to sheer insanity, in others to an almost grotesque spirit of mischief, but in a far larger class they may be set down as the outpourings of arrogance; as who should say, "I have the wealth, the will, and the power, and am entitled, if I choose it, to make my whims and humours attend on what I give." Under which category is to be classed that Mr. Tuke, of Rotherham, who died in 1810, leaving a testamentary disposition that must have been the delight and amusement of the district. He left a penny to every child that should attend his funeral, to the utter disorganisation of, or certain holiday at, every school for miles round. The result was, that some seven hundred flocked to pay this tribute of respect: they received the allotted reward. This could have been no yearning towards infant life, for he was a notorious and churlish miser of the Scrooge pattern. To every poor woman in the parish was left the sum of one shilling. The only legacies of respectable amount were those that had reference to the glorification of his poor old remains—half a guinea was left to the bellringers "to strike off one peal of grand bobs" at the precise moment he was put down into the clay. Seven of the oldest navvies were to receive a guinea for "puddling him up" in his grave. There must have been great merriment and general hilarity at these odd obsequies. His more serious dispositions were quite in keeping. To a daughter he left four guineas; but to his old and faithful servant twenty guineas a year. To an old woman, "who had for eleven years tucked him up in bed," was bequeathed the sum of one guinea. Finally, he set apart a sort of endowment to supply forty dozen penny loaves, which, at noon on every Christmas-day for ever, were to be thrown down from the steeple of the parish church. These ridiculous fancies were no doubt the offspring of a petty vanity wishing to obtain the most fuss and publicity at a very cheap rate—tinged also with a wish to leave some trouble behind him.

Akin to this testator must have been Oliver the Miller, who died about seventy years ago. He seems to have had a strange fancy for the colour popularly associated with millers and their men, and perhaps their hats. He was interred in a choice spot, and close to his mill, in a tomb made by himself some thirty years before, and in a coffin which had reposed many years under his bed. It was all painted white, and was carried by eight men harmoniously dressed in the same colour; a young girl, twelve years old, officiated as clergyman, and preached a sermon at the edge of the grave. Now, again, it may be asked, what pleasure could Oliver have found in the anticipation of these grotesque rites?

To the pure Tartuffe element the preparation

of these instruments is specially favourable. It is attended also by the love of authorship, with the tolerable certainty that the composition will be received with a favour and consideration it could not obtain under other circumstances, and when dealing with less important matters. When the testator takes pen in hand, the temptation is to enlarge on his own piety—that is, on his own personal defects and shortcomings—but as it were challenging contradiction. The feeling in the reader's mind is to be, "Here is this rich man, yet how humble, how good, how he acknowledges his faults!" Of this pattern, too, are the testators who bequeath trifling articles, each accompanied with a sort of homily supposed to be of far greater value. Here, again, in dealing with the reception of both these articles, a Molière or Balzac has the most delightful field for dramatic effect, in the disgust and impatience of the legatee, and the struggle between a decent deportment, and disappointment. Thus, a Yorkshireman, Mr. North, who died in 1773, went into an elaborate catalogue of pennyworth trifles, ballasted by an intolerable quantity of what he thought sack. "I give," said this gentleman, "to Mrs. R. G., my English walnut bureau, made large to contain clothes, but hope she will not forget when she makes use of it that graces and virtue are a lady's most ornamental dress." We may conceive the toss of the head and contemptuous sniff with which this double present was received; with, perhaps, a "like his impudence! his old trumpery rattletrap!" If testators are sincere in wishing their parting advice to go home and benefit the recipient, they must surely know that their best chance is to balance it handsomely; just as a person wishing to send a note over a wall to a prisoner wraps a heavy stone up in it. This gentleman also gave his old sword to a lieutenant, "hoping, if ever occasion require it, he will convince a rash world he has learnt to obey his God as well as his general." No doubt the officer welcomed this present with the choice words then fashionable in the army. Having disposed of his property, the testator then took "this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the Grand Original Proprietor," a phrase that recals the speech of a strolling manager which the writer once heard, and who, in announcing the fresh engagements he proposed making, devotionally qualified his intentions, by submission to the decrees of "The Great Manager of All!" "All my faults and follies," goes on the testator, "almost infinite as they have been, I leave behind me, with wishes that they may be buried. My *infant graces and embryo virtues* are, I trust, gone before me into heaven." This is a faithful precedent.

One would have liked a peep into the wicked old heart of a certain Lambeth parishioner, who died in 1772, and in whose fingers the pen must have quivered with rage and senile spite. No doubt the revenge was unfelt by its object, who must have long since given up all hope of receiving anything from his bounty, as indeed he also knew. He—and people like him—had only the bare satisfaction of a profitless spite. "Whereas," wrote this precious testator, "it was my misfortune to be made very uneasy by Elizabeth G., my wife, for many years, by her turbulent behaviour, for she was not content with despising my admonition, but she contrived every method to make me unhappy. She was so perverse in her nature that she would not be reclaimed, but seemed only to be born to be a plague to me. The strength of Samson, the knowledge of Homer, the prudence of Augustus, the cunning of Pyrrhus, the patience of Job, the subtilty of Hannibal, and the watchfulness of Hermogenes, could not have been sufficient to subdue her. And as we have lived separate and apart from each other eight years, and she having perverted her son to leave and totally abandon me, therefore I give her one shilling only." The shilling thus contemptuously left was not meant, as is sometimes supposed, as a compliance with the letter of some obsolete legal form, which required that the object should be mentioned, in some shape, in the will. It was meant as an evidence that the testator was aware of what he was doing, and had not omitted the person thus marked out, through forgetfulness.

An old Welshman, Mr. Morgan, within two years of a hundred, left all he had to his "old faithful housekeeper," with, however, this good-humoured "hit" at her. "She is a tolerably good woman, but would be much better if she had not so clamorous a tongue."

That wealthy Mrs. Gatford, of Horsham, who died in 1799, was certainly "odd" during the later years of her life. For twenty years she had never gone out once, and though she kept a carriage, it was seen gradually rotting away in the coach-house until it fell to pieces. Her horses lived luxuriously all that time, enjoying the richest pastures, and doing as they pleased. But, at the end, the main portion of her will was found to be sane enough, as she left nearly all to the poor, with the exception of fifteen pounds a year for the support of her cats and dogs. She was of the class that is morbidly solicitous as to what is done with their remains, a feeling that is intelligible if not pushed too far, as in the present instance. She ordered that her remains were to be kept a whole month in her room, and to be diligently washed in spirits every night to keep away decomposition. She was to be then laid in no less than four coffins, and the outer one was to be of marble. All these directions were strictly carried out. Even this feeling, morbid as it is, is more excusable than that of the man who "does not care what is done with his carcase," and says they "may throw him out on a dunghill if they like." We can understand, too, the feeling that thinks of "a sweet spot" under trees or aisles, and longs to be laid there, but scarcely that selfishness which imposes upon sorrowing relatives the weary duty of gratifying a whim, and of bearing away the dead to some distant spot in a foreign land, which was once seen and fancied. No one can conceive the inconvenience, misery, and cost of these mortuary shifting deportations. The wish

for extra coffins is in many a dread of the dreadful co-tenants of the grave, and those who have shrunk from rats and worms during their lifetime, cannot endure that such intruders should visit their remains unchecked. When such precautions are assured they die easier. Thus it was that the late Sir Philip Crampton—Sir Walter Scott's Crampton—who died only a few years ago, left directions that his coffin should be filled up with plaster of Paris "to keep away the rats," which was accordingly done. We may imagine this dismal and grotesque operation in presence of the relatives, the plasterers pouring in their liquid material, the gradual covering in of the poor relics, the last glimpses, and the final "setting" in one hard mass. It was of this physician, when a public testimonial was being planned, to be set up in a public burying-ground to his memory, that a truly witty remark was made by a brother of the profession, who, arguing the needlessness of such a commemoration, applied a famous inscription. "For," he said, "si monumentum quæris circumspice."

The remaining curious specimens on our list, of wills and will-making, must be reserved for another chapter next week.

THE BROWN-PAPER PARCEL.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

A very woman: one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears.
LOWELL.

"MISS MACKWORTH, Miss Mackworth!"

"Miss Mackworth, do look what we've got."

With a shout, a rush, and a bang, four children, loaded with packages, stormed into the school-room of a certain house in Onslow-square, London, eager to exhibit their holiday purchases to their young governess.

Miss Mackworth was seated on the floor in the cheerful fire-light, and close beside her crouched three little mortals, four-year-old twin girls, and a fat toddling baby boy, all watching with wide-open eyes and suspended breath, while her steady fingers built up, brick on brick, a splendid tower nearly as high as the mantel-piece.

"O Miss Mackworth!" cried Archie, a rough-headed boy of eight, "it has been so jolly. First we went to Bond Street, and then to the German Fair, and then to the Bazaar—and only look here!"

"Miss Mackworth, please look at our dolls," petitioned twin girls of six.

"Oh! stuff about your stupid dolls! What does Miss Mackworth care for such girls' trash. Miss Mackworth, *here's* a cross bow! Won't I make the deer at Granny's look out sharp!"

"Now Archie, Archie," interposed Carrie, a demure damsel of ten, rather oppressed by the weight of her eldership, "do put the things down properly, and then Miss Mackworth can see them. Dear! are the nursery children here?" as baby made a sudden onslaught on the tower of bricks, and tumbled it down with a great crash.

"Yes," said Mary Mackworth. "Nurse and Harriet are busy packing, and the poor little things seemed so dreadfully in the way that I asked leave to have them down here. They have been very good."

"I'm glad they have been good," said Carrie, patronisingly: "now Archie, don't you go cutting that string. You'll be teazing us all for string to-morrow, you know you will."

"Bother to-morrow! I shall be at Littlemore, and Granny'll give me heaps of string. I say! Miss Mackworth——"

Then arose the tumult afresh, and Miss Mackworth, forbearing to hush where hushing was vain, gave full and free attention to every article exhibited; admired and criticised, praised the serviceable presents chosen by Carrie for the almshouse women and servants at Littlemore, and finally promised to cut out and place some garments for endless dolls bought for grandmama's school-tree. The hubbub did not subside until the arrival of the nursemaid in quest of the little ones reminded the school-room party that they must make haste to prepare for tea.

In three hours' time the little flock were all in bed, and Miss Mackworth sate, in sole possession of the school-room, busily engaged in arranging the promised dolls' clothes.

Presently, Mrs. Halroyd came in: a pretty, faded woman, still quite young, but with the matronly figure and somewhat worn countenance which generally distinguish the mother of a "large small family."

"How good-natured of you, Miss Mackworth," she said, glancing at the governess's work: "you spoil those little people!" And then, as she laid an envelope on the table, she said nervously, colouring and hesitating, "I think, you will find that quite right: and I will let you know the day of our return—probably not before the 20th of January—my mother-in-law wishes for a long visit this year."

"Thank you very much."

"You don't go to your uncle's this time, I think?"

"Oh, no!" and the bright dark colouring deepened, and the brown eyes danced, but half tearfully: "I am going *home!* to Farley-in-the-Fields."

"Ah! yes," said Mrs. Halroyd, her

languid interest roused by the young governess's evident delight. "You will like that. I think you have spent all your holidays till now at Clapham, have you not?"

"Yes: it was too expensive to go all the way home."

"It must be a long journey to Farley."

"Yes: I have to start at eight in the morning, and I get to Brigham, our nearest town, at five."

"Dear me! that is a long time to be in the train, and in this cold weather too, eight—nine hours!"

"It is the cheapest train: I don't mind its being slow," Mary said, simply: "my brother will meet me at Brigham."

"Well, good-night," said Mrs. Halroyd, rising: "not good-by,—for I shall see you to-morrow. You don't leave town till the next day, I think?"

"If I may stay," said Mary, "I should like to do a little shopping before I go."

"Certainly: I hope the servants will take good care of you." And Mrs. Halroyd departed, congratulating herself on having got over her quarterly penance of paying Miss Mackworth's salary: a thing to which she never could get accustomed. She always fancied that it must be as painful to the governess as to herself; wherein she was wholly mistaken, for it appeared to Mary the most natural and desirable arrangement in the world that she should work hard and be paid for doing so. Her first act was to draw out the three crisp, rustling five-pound notes—her quarter's salary—and actually waltz round once or twice in a burst of childish happiness. Then she went to her desk, and drew out two more five-pound notes, saved from the last quarter at the cost of who knows what weary hours of ceaseless stitchery; what private washings, and starchings of sleeves and laces; what vigorous self-denial in the matter of ribbons and dresses, things which no one appreciated more thoroughly than Mary Mackworth.

"How much," she deliberated, "may I fairly spend in presents? How much must I keep for those terrible Christmas bills at home? The journey will cost—let me see—I will go third class instead of second—that will save something. And one thing I may let myself get:—a winter shawl for the dear mother—that is useful—that she really wants. Harry must take the stockings I have knitted him for a present—and anything will please the little boys. But oh! I should like to get papa that book about the Jewish church that he said would be so useful in his lectures on the Old Testament, and I must keep a little money to buy some trifle for Cilla: something dainty and pretty, like her dear bonny self!"

Next morning the whole Halroyd family were off soon after breakfast to spend Christmas with Colonel Halroyd's mother at her place in Surrey. As soon as the two cabs and the carriage had disappeared, and Miss Mackworth could cease smiling and kissing her hand to the little nodding, grinning faces at the window, she turned back into the house, and raced nimbly up-stairs, rejoicing that she might run up two steps at a time without setting a bad example, put on her cloak and bonnet, looped up her dress, provided herself with a thick cotton umbrella, and set forth on her round of shopping. She had settled with her conscience the exact sum which she might allow herself to spend in presents: and as is usually the case, that sum did not go as far as she had expected. As she went to distant shops, and performed all her errands on foot, it took a long time, and the short daylight was almost gone, when, having bought a serviceable shawl for her mother, some toys for the children, and a few cheap prettinesses for her sister, she looked with dismay at the money in her purse, now considerably dwindled.

"Oh dear! shall I ever be able to get that Jewish book for papa?" she thought: and then, wrapping herself in her cloak, for the afternoon was very bleak and raw, with a biting wind, she betook herself to a bookseller's in Oxford-street. The man supplied all Mrs. Halroyd's school-room books, and knew Miss Mackworth well. He saw and pitied her look of blank disappointment when the work proved to be quite beyond her means, and good-naturedly made a suggestion.

"I'll tell you where you might possibly get it for your price, ma'am. They often sell off their surplus copies at Grueby's, and you might have a chance there."

"Oh! thank you," said Miss Mackworth, heartily; and, quite undismayed at the increasing cold and thickening darkness, she hailed a passing omnibus, and soon found herself at her new destination. Rather timidly, for the place was new to her, she approached the counter, and, to her great joy, found what she wanted at a more moderate price than she had dared to hope. She could not repress an exclamation of pleasure, and then coloured, feeling that her earnest "Oh! that *is* nice!" low-toned though it was, had attracted the attention of a gentleman who was standing by, waiting for a box of books. The box made its appearance just as Mary had laid down

her money, and taken possession of her book, and he politely held open the door for her. A small, dirty snow was falling thickly: the pavements were already wet, for it thawed as it fell; and the darkness seemed to have come on suddenly, perhaps from contrast with the bright gaslight inside. Mary stood still for a moment bewildered; then tried, in the failing light, to hail an omnibus; but the man took no notice of her signal, and she perceived that his vehicle was over-loaded already. It was disagreeable to find herself belated so far from home, especially as she was very tired and laden with small parcels which were troublesome to carry; but Mary was always more disposed to make light of misadventures than to turn them into heavy grievances, so she prepared to walk. As she put up her umbrella, a voice close to her said, "I beg your pardon. Have you no carriage here? no cab?"

"No," she answered frankly, looking straight up into the speaker's face, as her custom was. She then perceived that the speaker was the gentleman whom she had seen before, and moreover that his face was young and pleasant,—"but it doesn't matter—I am a good walker."

"But it is coming on to snow harder. I have a cab waiting here. Will you allow me to put you into it?"

"Oh! no! you are very kind, but indeed I would rather walk; I think it is going to clear." Herewith, as if to contradict her, came a gust of wind and sleet which nearly knocked her over. The stranger laughed. Mary could not help following his example, and next moment found that he was handing her into a Hansom cab. She made one more horrified protest.

"Oh! no, I can't think of it. What will you do! With that box of books too——"

"I will wait here, and send for another cab; it is no inconvenience to me, I assure you. Where shall I tell him to drive?"

A rapid calculation passed through Mary's mind. "How far can I go for a shilling?"

"To the further end of Piccadilly, if you please," she said, and it struck her that there was a little look of vexation, of disappointment even, on the face of her kind friend, as he bowed and raised his hat, as respectfully as if the little parcel-laden woman in her old plaid cloak had been a royal princess.

"Oh! dear, I know he'll catch cold, and then it'll be all my fault!" was Mary's first reflection; "one thing is, I shall never know it, if he does. If only I could have dared to ask him to get in too! When I first came from home I really think I should have done so—but I know better now. Well! this is comfortable certainly; much better than that stuffy omnibus. And how delightful to have got my book!"

And she went off into a vision of the pleasure which her gift would bring to the hard-working, underpaid curate, whose cultivated mind and scholarly tastes were always suffering a famine, as his daughter well knew.

In a very short time she had reached the house, and was seated by the snug fire in the school-room, wrapped in a warm shawl while her dress was drying, and thoroughly enjoying the mutton chops and tea brought to her by Susan, the little school-room maid, who regarded her as the first of human beings.

"You must not forget all your learning, Susan, while I am away," said she; "I have set you ever so many copies, and I think now you can manage to write to me by yourself, can't you? And ah! Susan, my canary-bird, and my poor geraniums—I trust them all to you."

Susan promised the utmost attention, while she stowed away package after package in Miss Mackworth's trunk, with more zeal than dexterity, as Mary soon perceived.

"Oh, take care!" she cried, springing up to the defence of Cilla's prettinesses: then checking herself, as Susan looked blank and vaguely self-reproachful, "thank you, that is very nice,—but I can finish packing myself now, if you will hand me the things. There were a few moments of busy silence. "Now, Susan, I want something small and soft, just to fill up this corner. Is there anything that will do?"

"Yes, miss," responded Susan; "here's a brown-paper parcel as will just fit in," and she handed to Mary a small parcel carefully tied with pack-thread and further secured with sealing-wax.

"What can this be?" exclaimed Mary; "how carefully the shop-people have done it up. Are you sure it is one of my things, Susan?"

"'Twas here on the sofy, miss, along with the rest."

"Oh! then, it must be all right; Cilla's gloves, I suppose," she said, fingering it, and finding its contents soft and yielding; "anyhow, it will just do to fill up my corner. Now, Susan, please come, and help me with the cover of my box. It looks as if it didn't mean to shut. That's it! Beautifully shut! And now for the direction."

With a thrill of satisfaction which made it hard to keep her pen steady, she wrote in her bold clear hand the well-known and dearly loved address, of Farley-in-the-Fields, Brigham.

CHAPTER II.

It was long past five o'clock on the following afternoon, when the third-class train, dragging its slow length along, crawled into the gas-lighted station belonging to the large and important county town of Brigham. Mary Mackworth was chilled, and cramped, and hungry, and weary, but nevertheless full of delight, which had been increasing for the last hour or two, as the names of well-known places were shouted out, and as now and then through the darkness dimly loomed the outline of hills, towers, and churches, all familiar landmarks.

As her bright face appeared at the window, a hand was laid on the door, and a tall, well-grown lad, a year or two younger than herself, and very like her, helped her eagerly from the carriage.

"Well, Mary!" "Well, my dearest old Harry!" were the greetings of the brother and sister; and then followed the inevitable questions and answers about luggage; and then followed the rush to secure it; and then they emerged into the street where several vehicles were waiting.

"There is the van!" exclaimed Mary, "and old Dobson and his old horse, all just as ever."

"Yes; but *you*'re not going in the van," said Harry, importantly; "Dobson will take your box, but I have borrowed Farmer Murch's gig for you and me. Here it is; you haven't forgotten how to climb into a gig, Mary, have you?"

"Not I," laughed Mary, as she scrambled into her place, and let Harry draw the leathern apron over her knees; "jump in, Harry, I long to be off; how are they all?"

"All flourishing except Cilly—she's a poor piece of goods this winter—but there's nothing much the matter with her."

"And Jack and Laurry?"

"Oh! they're all right—grown like beans," answered Harry.

"How home-like it all looks!" cried Mary, with sparkling eyes, as they left the town, and emerged into the dark country road.

"Better than all the swell London shops, eh?" said Harry with a smile. "Hollo!"

The exclamation was caused by a mail phaeton, drawn by a pair of high stepping horses, which met them at the moment. A groom was driving; otherwise the carriage was empty.

"What a grand affair for this part of the world!" cried Mary. "Who can it belong to, Harry?"

"Can't imagine. Oh, yes, I can, though. The great banker, Mr. Langley, has bought Nettlehurst, and I dare say it is one of his concerns going to meet the down express, at five-fifty."

"Mr. Langley who has the Bank of Brigham? Why I thought he was dead?"

"To be sure: he died a year ago—the old man did, that is—and left the bank and money, and all the rest of it, to his cousin, who was as rich as Crœsus before, they say. The London bank of the same name belongs to him; but that's always the way. Wealth attracts wealth."

"And the new man has bought Nettlehurst! Then the poor old Hathaways are quite gone out of the land, I suppose! That seems sad."

"A precious good thing, bad lot that they were. There have been painters and paperers, and all sorts of doings there, all the summer, and the banker is coming to take possession now, they say. I bet anything he's coming to-night."

"I dare say it will be a good change for all the poor people about Nettlehurst, especially if his wife is nice."

"He has no wife, I believe, another old bachelor, like Mr. Langley. But he's going to give a ball, I heard some people saying, by way of house-warming, so I suppose he must have some sort of womankind belonging to him to do the honours."

"Oh how I should like to go!" cried Mary, eagerly.

"Much chance of that! Do you suppose he'll ever hear of your existence? Why, Nettlehurst isn't even in our parish, you know; it's right over the hill; and we don't know this man, nor anything about him, except that he's first cousin to old Langley,—and beastly rich," concluded the boy, giving a vicious cut to Farmer Murch's steady old Dobbin.

"But how delicious it would be! Fancy seeing Cilla at a ball! She would be the prettiest girl there, and how I should enjoy watching her, and hearing what people said!"

"My dear, you don't suppose any of *us* could ever go to a ball? Why a fly from Brigham would cost fifteen shillings, let alone clothes and gloves and things. Balls are not much in our line, nor anything else worth having."

The tone was even more desponding than the words, and Mary leaned forward to look into his face, which he immediately turned, so that the light of the gig lamps should not fall on it.

"What is it, dear old boy?"

"Oh! nothing—only the old story," said the lad in the same tone. "I'm sure you've heard enough of it, Polly, in my letters;

you must be sick of the subject." And he gave a sort of laugh.

"The army?"

"I never can fancy anything else, never; and I know my father wouldn't mind, though it isn't much in his line. And once in it I'd make my pay do, and never ask him for a farthing. I'd get to India if I could. But of course it can't be—I know that well enough—but it is hard lines."

"It is indeed. Couldn't we save?"

"Save, out of two hundred and fifty pounds a year, and with seven mouths to feed! Do you suppose I'd ask such a thing? With mother wearing herself out, as it is, and poor Cilla who ought to be having port wine and good things all day long, they say, and the little ones to be looked after too! No, I'm not such a selfish beast as that; I have never told anybody but you. But somehow," he said, turning to her with a brighter face, "one can't help telling you everything, old Polly."

"What does papa mean you to do?"

"Hasn't mother told you? I couldn't bear to write about it, but I dare say it'll be all right when I'm used to the idea. Mr. Bagshawe has offered me a place in his office under old Hobbs. Forty pounds a year to begin with, and a rise if I behave myself."

"An attorney's clerk!" cried Mary, her colour rising. "Oh! Harry, I hope not!"

There was a long pause. Mary broke it by saying with renewed cheerfulness: "After all, Harry dear, God knows best, if we could only think so. You'll be a good man, and a gentleman too, whatever you are. I know that."

Harry muttered something, and then broke out with: "The injustice of the thing is what makes me frantic. To see that fellow Langley, for instance, throwing away sums on his horses and carriages, and balls and stuff, when a quarter of the money would set us all up for life. And that old twaddle, Lowther, pocketing his nine hundred pounds a year for the living, and just giving my father two hundred pounds for doing all his work. I've no patience."

"Has Dr. Lowther been heard of lately?" said Mary, trying to lead away from the subject.

"Sent my father a cheque, as usual, for the almshouse dinner on Christmas Day, and the school feast and all that, and hoped we would accept all the compliments of the season, stupid old bloke."

Mary laughed irreverently at her brother's mention of the rector, who, though nominally resident, yet suffering from a variety of nervous complaints, really spent almost one half of the year at Ventnor and the other at Malvern; and even when at Farley, seldom emerged from his comfortable rectory.

"But mamma said that Dr. Lowther was really much worse," she remarked.

Harry shrugged his shoulders and laughed, and at that moment, as they reached the top of a long hill, Mary uttered a joyful exclamation as the lights of Farley twinkled out in the broad green valley below.

The descent was rapid, and in about a quarter of an hour they passed over a picturesque old-fashioned bridge, and entered the straggling, irregular village street. The "Blue Anchor" stood with hospitable open door; then came the blacksmith's open shed, casting its red warmth and light out into the chilly evening; further on, the village shop, the centre of gossip and business in Farley. Cottages stood on either side of the road, some detached, some in blocks of two or three together. Harry drew rein at last before a little garden gate leading to a white-washed cottage not much above the labourers' dwellings by which it was surrounded; but it was home; the home of Mary's heart.

In a moment, she was at the open door—in the little passage—in the small square parlour—fond arms were round her, eager hands were freeing her from her cloak and shawl, all the dear voices were talking at once, and nobody listening to anybody! And when the first buzz of welcome subsided, it was more delightful still: when Mary had taken off her bonnet in the little room which she shared with Cilla, and had come down again to the sitting-room, and when Harry had returned from putting up the gig, and when Mr. Mackworth had come in from his parish work, and had added his affectionate greeting to that of the rest, then Mary gaily insisted on resuming old habits and performing all her old home duties—to try, as she said, to fancy that she had never been away. She lighted the candles, trimmed the fire, helped to spread the supper table, and afterwards to clear it away, and finally sat down, between her father and mother, and with Cilla, and Harry, and the two younger boys, close by, and talked and listened, enjoying the full tide of home talk.

The first interruption came when her boxes came, which was not until late, Dobson's progress, never rapid, having been further delayed by the number of Christmas hampers he had had to deliver.

Mr. Mackworth said that Laurry and Jack — two sturdy brown creatures, ten and eight years old—had better help Harry to carry up the boxes, and that, as it was nine o'clock, they need not return: but Mary looked so piteous and imploring, and so earnestly begged that one box might be opened then and there, and that the boys might stay to help, that he gave way with a smile, and settled himself in his arm-chair to see what the box contained. The first things to emerge were the various small pieces of finery which Mary had bought for her sister; nothing very costly, but dainty trifles which Cilla was known to prize: a pair of kid gloves, a collar and cuffs of the latest fashion, a few bright ribbons, and such like feminilities, at sight of which the slight, pale, golden-haired girl coloured with pleasure, and Mary's eyes sparkled with pride and love. Then came Mrs. Mackworth's gift, the warm serviceable shawl which Mary hung over her mother's shoulders, and then drew back, admiringly, watching the long, soft folds which hung gracefully on the still elegant figure.

"You look *so* nice, mother dear," she said, kissing the worn face which had once been as lovely as Cilla's: "doesn't she now, papa? And isn't the shawl just like herself—so nice, and soft, and grey. I chose it out of the heap directly." There was a laugh at this: and Mrs. Mackworth returned her daughter's kiss, as she assured her that her rheumatic shoulders would be thanking her all the winter through.

Laurry and Jack were made happy with a ball and a peg-top: and Harry with much real satisfaction took possession of the knitted stockings in which Mary excelled. Then, rather timidly, for all his children stood in some awe of the curate, she laid her gift upon her father's knee. Mr. Mackworth put on his spectacles, and studied the title.

"My dear! This book has been my roc's egg ever since it came out. But Mary, my dear, this is a costly gift. Have you found Fortunatus's purse?"

"I'll tell you exactly how it was, papa." And she related the history of her long vain quest, and of the journey to Grueby's, and of the little adventure which had there befallen her. Everybody grew rather excited; and the boys began to make a series of not too brilliant jokes about the chivalrous unknown. It was plain, Harry averred, that he had fallen in love at first sight. Was Mary sure that he had not hung on behind to find out her address? Cilla joined in with small witticisms, but ended by a little laugh and toss peculiar to herself, and the remark: "But it's of no use, Harry! This dear old Goody won't make a heroine of romance! Not in your line, is it, Polly?"

"Ah! if it had been you now, Cilla!" cried Mary, laughing.

The curate, awaking from the study of his new possession, and becoming alive to the fact that his children were talking nonsense, ordered the little boys off to bed, and suggested that Mary's box might as well be removed.

As she stooped to close the lid, she exclaimed, "Here is this mysterious brown-paper parcel left at the bottom, and it had not any of your things in it, Cilla, after all. What can it be?"

She took it up, and was about to open it, when the sound of little shrill voices floated in on the frosty air, and the boys came tumbling down in extraordinary deshabille, to beg that they might stay up to hear the school-children singing Christmas carols. There was a rush to doors and windows, and Mary threw the parcel upon the table, and thought of it no more.

That was a delightful evening; and the midnight chat with Cilla was delightful too. But when Mary had insisted on the weary, eager girl ceasing her chatter and going to sleep, she herself lay awake for long hours, and her thoughts were not pleasant companions. Home was more dear, home faces were more beloved than ever; but coming to it all with a fresh eye and a matured mind, she saw, as she had never seen before, how the whole family was groaning under the heavy pressure of poverty.

"But that, at all events, I'll see to," thought she; "while I am at home Cilla and the dear mother shall always have something that they can eat: but how will it be when I am gone? Well! sufficient to the day is the evil thereof, and I have six whole weeks to spend at home." And comforted by this thought, Mary Mackworth slept soundly on this first night of her return.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read on Saturday, March 20, and Monday, March 22, at Manchester; Tuesday, March 30, St. James's Hall, London; Wednesday, March 31, Sheffield; Thursday, April 1, and Friday, April 2, Birmingham; Monday, April 5, Tuesday, April 6, Thursday, April 8, and Friday, April 9, Liverpool; Tuesdays, April 13, 27, May 11, and 25, St. James's Hall, London.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VII. MARIAN'S REPLY.

MARIAN held the letter in her hand for a moment, irresolute whether to open it and read it at once, or to defer its perusal until another opportunity, when her mind might be less perturbed, and the feeling of conscious guilt then uppermost in her soul might have become quieted and soothed down. She was fully alive to the knowledge that she had behaved with the blackest treachery to Walter Joyce, had dealt him the severest stab, the deadliest blow, of which she was capable, had—for the time at least—completely blackened his future prospects; and yet, although he had done nothing to deserve this base treatment—on the contrary had been for ever loyal and devoted to her under the most adverse circumstances—her feeling for him was not one of pity, of regret, or even of contempt, but of downright hatred. She knew that she had been seriously to blame in neglecting all correspondence with her lover of late, and she imagined that the letter, which she still held unopened in her hand, was doubtless one of remonstrance or complaint. He had no right now to address her after such fashion, or indeed after any fashion whatever. This last thought struck her for an instant with a touch of tenderness, but she quickly put it aside as she thrust the letter into the bosom of her dress, and made her way to her mother's room.

She found Mrs. Ashurst seated in the bay window, at the little round table, on which lay her large-printed Bible, her bottle of smelling salts, and her spectacle case. Mrs. Ashurst had always been a small-framed, delicate-featured woman, but in these last few months she seemed to have shrunk away almost to nothing. The light steel frame of her spectacles looked disproportionately heavy on her thin nose, and her sunk pallid face, with the complexion of that dead white colour so often seen in old women, was almost lost in the plaits and frills of her neat cap. Though the day was fine and bright outside, the old lady evidently felt the cold; she wore a thick twilled woollen shawl thrown over her shoulders, and her cosy arm-chair was in the full view of the fire. She looked up as Marian entered, and, when she recognised the visitor, gave a little smile of welcome, took off her spectacles, closed her book, and put up her face for her daughter's kiss.

"What a long time you have been away, dear!" she said, in the softest little voice. "I thought you were never coming back! I was wondering what had become of you!"

"Did you think Dr. Osborne had run off with me in the four-wheeler, mother?" said Marian, smiling. "The knight and his means of flight are about equally romantic! We're later than usual, dear, because Hooton church is closed for repairs, and we've been to Helmingham!"

"Yes, I know that; but Maud and Gertrude went to Helmingham too, didn't they? And I'm sure I've heard their voices about the house this half-hour!"

"There were all sorts of Helmingham people to speak to in the churchyard after service—Mrs. Simmons, who is growing quite grey; and old Mrs. Peak, whose feet are very bad again, so bad that she can hardly get about now, poor soul; and young Freeman and young Ball, who have taken Mr. Smyth's cornchandlery business

at Brocksopp, and go over there next week; and Sam Baker, who is very much grown, and of whom Mr. Benthall speaks very highly. They all asked very kindly after you, mother!"

"I'm very much obliged to them, my dear. I shan't trouble them long, and——"

"Now, don't you remember your promise, never to talk in that way again?"

"Well, my dear, I won't if you don't like it. As for myself——however, no matter! And did you walk back with Mr. Creswell?"

"Yes, mother. Maud and Gertrude hurried on, and Mr. Creswell and I came leisurely after."

"You'll become quite old-fashioned, if you're so much with Mr. Creswell, Marian. Though why I say 'become,' I'm sure I don't know. You've always been old-fashioned from a child up."

"And am likely to remain so, dear, to all appearances!" said Marian, with a soft smile, bending down and kissing her mother's forehead. "Have you taken your medicine? No! then let me give it to you!" She went to a small cabinet, and brought out a tumbler and a spoon.

"I'm very glad you thought of the medicine, Marian," said the old lady; "not that it does me the least good, let Dr. Osborne say what he may, but because your fetching those things from that place reminded me of something I wanted to say to you. I've been all this morning—ever since I finished reading the Lessons—I've been going through the furniture in that parlour of Mrs. Swainson's in my mind, and I'm perfectly certain there's nothing, not even a common cupboard, to lock up anything!"

"Isn't there, mother?" said Marian, wearily.

"Isn't there? No indeed there is nothing, dear! Though you don't seem to think much about it, it's a very serious thing. Of course, one would keep the tea and sugar in the caddy, but there are many little odds and ends that ought to be locked up, and—are you listening to me, Marian?"

"Yes, mother!" she said, but her looks belied her words. She was leaning against the mantelpiece, her head resting on her hand, and her thoughts were evidently far away.

"I wonder you had not noticed that, Marian, when we went over the lodgings," pursued Mrs. Ashurst. "You're generally such a one to notice these kind of things, and I've been used to depend upon you, so that I think nothing about them. What shall we do about that? I suppose Mrs. Swainson would not be inclined to buy a cabinet—a second-hand one would do perfectly——"

"I don't think we need go into the question. We shall never go to Mrs. Swainson's lodgings!"

"No? What shall we do then?"

"Remain here!"

"Well, my dear," said the old lady, "if you change your plans so often, how am I possibly to know where we're going, or what we're going to do? Not that I want to be consulted, but I really might as well be a chair or a table for the manner in which I'm treated. I thought you said, not more than a fortnight ago, that it was impossible we could stop here any longer?"

"So I did, mother! but circumstances have changed since then. This morning, as we walked from church, Mr. Creswell asked me to become his wife!"

"His wife! Mr. Creswell! you to—and you accepted him?"

"I did!"

The old lady fell back in her chair, her eyes closed, her hands fluttering nervously before her. Marian ran to her mother and knelt by her side, but Mrs. Ashurst revived almost immediately—revived sufficiently to place her hand round her daughter's neck and to whisper in her ear, "For my sake?"

"I don't understand you, dearest mother!"

"For my sake? You've done this for my sake! that I may be comfortable and happy for the rest of my life, that I may have these things, luxuries"—pointing with her hand round the room. "You've sacrificed yourself! It must not be, listen, Marian—it must not be!"

"Darling mother, you're all wrong, indeed you are—you're quite mistaken."

"Marian, it must not be! I'm a weakly woman I know, but what answer should I make to your dear father when I meet him again—soon now, very soon, please God!—if I permitted this thing? What would he say if he learned that I was selfish enough to permit you to sacrifice yourself, you whom he so worshipped, to become the wife of an old man, in order that I might profit by it? What would he think of Mr. Creswell, who pretended to be his friend, and who would——"

"Mother, dearest mother, you must not speak against Mr. Creswell, please! Recollect, he is to be my husband!"

"Very well, my dear," said the old lady, quietly, "I'll ask you one question, and after that you'll never hear me open my lips on the matter. Do you love Mr. Creswell?"

"Yes, mother!"

"Better than any other man living?"

"Ye—yes, mother!" She hesitated for an instant, but the answer came round and firm at last.

"You swear that to me?"

"Yes, mother!"

"That's enough, my dear! I shall be ready to face your father now." Mrs. Ashurst then removed her arm from her daughter's neck and lay back in her chair. After a minute or two she told Marian she had heard the luncheon gong sound, and that she would prefer being left alone for a little. When Marian came up to kiss her before leaving the room, the little old lady's white face became suffused with a glow of colour, and the voice in which she prayed God bless her child, and keep her happy throughout her life, was broken with emotion, and weaker and fainter than ever.

When she was alone Mrs. Ashurst pondered long and earnestly over what she had just heard. Of course, the question of Marian's future—and to her parents as well as herself the future of every girl means her marriage—had been often thought of by her mother. She and her dead husband had talked of it in the summer evenings after supper and before retiring to rest, the only time which the school-work left for James Ashurst to devote to himself, and even then he was generally rather fatigued with past, or pre-occupied with growing work. It was very general, the talk between them, and principally carried on by Mrs. Ashurst; she had wondered when Marian would marry, and whom; she had gone through the list of eligible young men in the neighbourhood, and had speculated on their incomes and their chances of being thrown with Marian in such little company as they kept. She had wondered how they at home would be able to get on without her; whether she herself would be able to undertake the domestic superintendence as she had done in the old days, before Marian was of an age to be useful; whether Marian would not settle somewhere near where she might still take an interest in her old work, and many other odd and profitless speculations, to which the dominie would give an affirmative or negative grunt or comment, wondering all the while how he was to meet that acceptance which he had given to Barlow, and which became due on the twenty-seventh, or whether his old college chum South, now a flourishing physician in Cheltenham, would lend him the fifty pounds for which he had made so earnest an appeal. But all this seemed years ago to Mrs. Ashurst as she thought of it. For many months before her husband's death the subject had not been mooted between them; the cold, calm, external impassibility, and the firm determination of Marian's character, seemed to her mother to mark her for one of those women destined by nature to be single, and therefore somewhat fitted for the condition. A weak woman herself, and with scarcely any perception of character, believing that nearly all women were made in the same mould, and after the same type, Mrs. Ashurst could not understand the existence of the volcano under the placid surface. Only gushing, giggling, blushing girls fulfilled her idea of loving women, or women lovable by men. Marian was so "odd," and "strange," so determined, so strong-minded, that she never seemed to think of love-making, nor indeed, her mother thought, had she been ever so much that way disposed would she have had any time for it.

And now Marian was going to be married? Years rolled away, and the old lady saw herself in the same condition, but how differently circumstanced. Her James was young, and strong, and handsome. How splendid he looked in his flannel boating-dress, when he came to spend a hurried holiday at her father's river-side cottage! how all the people in the church admired him on their wedding-day! It was impossible that Marian could love this man, who was quite old enough to be her father, love him, that is, in the proper way, in the way that a husband should be loved. She could look up to him, and respect, and reverence him, and so on, but that was not the way in which she had loved her James. She had not the least respect for him, but used to laugh at him for his awkwardness, and great strong clumsy ways, never knowing what to do with his long legs and his great feet, and used to call him "a great goose," she recollected that, and the recollection brought the colour to her face, and made her smile in spite of herself. Marian could never call Mr. Creswell "a great goose," could never think of him so familiarly, no matter how long they might be married. What could have brought it about? She had very good eyes, she thought, and yet she had never suspected

Mr. Creswell of any partiality for Marian, any, at least, beyond that which a man in his position, and of his age, might be expected to feel for a bright, intelligent girl, with whom he was thrown into frequent contact. And as for Marian, it was the last thing she should have expected of her. If she were to think of marriage, which Mrs. Ashurst never contemplated, she would not have suffered herself to be thrown away on a man so much older than herself, she would have looked for some one whom she could love. No! it was what had first struck her, and the more she thought about it, the more convinced she grew! Marian had sacrificed herself on the shrine of filial duty, she had accepted the position of Mr. Creswell's wife in order that her mother might be able to continue in the house where all possible comforts and luxuries were at her command. It was a good motive, a noble affectionate resolve, but it would never turn out well, she was sure of that. There had been a baronet once under James's tuition; what was his name? Attride, Sir Joseph Attride, a young man of rather weak intellect, who had been sent by his friends to be what James called "coached for something," and who had a very large fortune. Why did not Marian take him, or Mr. Lawrence, the miller and churchwarden, who was very rich, and took so much snuff. Either of them would have been much more suited to her than Mr. Creswell. And so the old lady sat, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, but always coming back to her proposition that Marian had sacrificed herself for her mother's sake, throughout the afternoon.

When Marian left her mother she did not take the hint about the luncheon bell—the pretence under which Mrs. Ashurst had asked to be left to herself. She knew that if her absence from the table were remarked, it would be attributed to the fact of her being engaged in attendance on her mother. She knew further that Mr. Creswell would not expect to see her just then, and she calculated on having two or three hours to herself free from all interruption. So she went straight to her own room, turned the key in the lock, sat herself down in a low chair opposite the fire—fires are kept constantly alive in that north-midland county, where coals are cheap, and the clay soil cold and damp—took Walter Joyce's letter from the bosom of her dress, opened, and began to read it. It was a task-work which she had to go through, and she nerved herself as for a task-work. Her face was cold and composed, her lower jaw set and rigid. As she read on the rigidity of her muscles seemed to increase. She uttered no sound, but read carefully every word. A slight expression of scorn crossed her face for a moment at Walter's insisting on the necessity of their good faith towards each other, but the next instant it vanished, and the set rigidity returned—returned but to be equally fleeting, to be swept away in a storm of weeping, in a hurricane of tears, in a wild outburst of genuine womanly feeling, showing itself in heaving bosom, in tear-blistered face, in passionate rocking to and fro, in frenzied claspings of the hands and tossing of the head, and in low moaning cries of, "Oh, my love! my love!" It was the perusal of the end of Joyce's letter that had brought Marian Ashurst into this state; it was the realisation of the joy which, in his utter devotion to her, must have filled his heart as he was enabled to offer to share what he imagined great prosperity with her, that wrung her conscience and showed her treatment of him in its worst light. It was of her alone that he thought when this offer was made to him. He spoke of it simply as a means to an end—that end their marriage and the comfort of her mother, whose burden he also proposed to undertake. He said nothing of what hard work, what hitherto unaccustomed responsibility, it would entail upon him; he thought but of the peace of mind, the freedom from worry, the happiness which he imagined it would bring to her. How noble he was! how selfless and single-minded! This was a man to live and die for and with, indeed! Was it too late? Should she go bravely and tell Mr. Creswell all? He was sensible and kind hearted, would see the position, and appreciate her motives, though the blow would be a heavy one for him. He would let her retract her consent, he would——Impossible! It might have been possible if she had read the letter before she had told her mother of Mr. Creswell's proposal, but now impossible. Even to her mother she could not lay bare the secrets of her heart, disclose the slavery in which she was held by that one ruling passion under whose control she had broken her own plighted word, and run the risk of breaking one of the truest and noblest hearts that ever beat. No, she could not do that. She was growing calmer now; her tears had ceased to flow, and she was walking about the room, thinking the matter out. No! even suppose—well, this proposal had not been

made: it would have been impossible to move Mrs. Ashurst in her then state to Berlin, and she could not have gone without her; so that Walter must either have gone alone, or the marriage must have been deferred. And then the income —four hundred a year. It was very good, no doubt, in comparison to what they had been existing on since papa's death—very superior to anything they could have expected, quite a sufficiency for one or two young people to begin life upon; but for three, and the third one an invalid, in a foreign country! No; it was quite impossible. Marian looked round the room as she said these words; her eyes lighted on the bright furniture, the pretty prints that adorned the walls, the elegant ornaments and knick-knacks scattered about, the hundred evidences of wealth and taste which were henceforth to be at her entire command, and repeated, "Quite impossible!" more decisively than before. By this time she was quite herself again, had removed every trace of her recent discomposure, and had made up her mind definitively as to her future. Only one thing troubled her;—what should be her immediate treatment of Walter Joyce? Should she ignore the receipt of his letter, leave it unanswered, take the chance of his understanding from her silence that all was over between them? Or should she write to him, telling him exactly what had happened—putting it, of course, in the least objectionable way for herself? Or should she temporise, giving her mother's delicate state of health and impossibility of removal abroad as the ground of her declining to be married at once, as he required, and beginning, by various hints, which she thought she could manage cleverly enough, to pave the way for the announcement, to be delayed as long as practicable, that their engagement was over, and that she was going to marry some one else? At first she was strongly inclined to act upon the last of these three motives, thinking that it would be easier to screen herself, or, at all events to bear the brunt of Joyce's anger when he was abroad. But, after a little consideration, a better spirit came over her. She had to do what was a bad thing at best; she would do it in the least offensive manner possible; she would write to him.

She sat down at the little, ink-bespattered, old-fashioned writing-desk which she had had for so many years, on which she had written so often to her lover, and which contained a little packet of his letters, breathing of hope and trust and deep-rooted affection in every line, and wrote:

"Woolgreaves, Sunday.

"My dear Walter,—I have something to tell you which you must know at once. I can approach the subject in no roundabout fashion, because I know it will cause you a great shock, and it is better for you to know it at once. I do not pretend to any doubt about the pain and grief which I am sure it will cause you. I will tell you my reasons for the step I am about to take when I tell you what I have already done. Walter, I have broken my engagement with you. I have promised to marry Mr. Creswell.

"I write this to you at once, almost directly after he proposed to me, and I have accepted him. Does it seem harsh and coarse in me to announce this to you so immediately? Believe me, the announcement is made from far different motives. I could not bear to be deceiving you. You will sneer at this, and say I have been deceiving you all along; I swear I have not. You will think that the very silence for which you reproached me in the letter just received has been owing to my dislike to tell you of the change in affairs. I swear it has not. I had no idea until this morning that Mr. Creswell liked me in any especial way; certainly none that he would ever ask me to become his wife.

"When he asked me, I had not had your letter. If I had, it would have made no difference in the answer I made to Mr. Creswell, but it deepens the pain with which I now write to you, showing me, as it does to an extent which I did not before quite realise, the store which you set by what is now lost to us for ever. I do not say this in excuse of myself, or my deeds; I have no excuse to make. I have tried, and tried hard, to live in the position of life in which I have been placed. I have struggled with poverty, and tried to face the future—which would have been worse than poverty, penury, misery, want perhaps—with calmness. I have failed. I cannot help it, it is my nature to love money and all that money brings, to love comforts and luxuries, to shrink from privation. Had I gone straight from my father's death-bed to your house as your wife, I might perhaps have battled on, but we came here, and—I cannot go back. You will be far happier without me when your first shock is over. I should have been an impossible wife for a poor man. I know I should—complaining, peevish, irritable. Ever repining at my

poverty, ever envying the wealth of others. You are better without me, Walter, you are, indeed! Our ways of life will be very different, and we shall never come across each other in any probability. If we should, I hope we shall meet as friends. I am sure it will not be very long before you recognise the wisdom of the course I am now taking, and are grateful to me for having taken it. You are full of talent, which you will now doubtless turn to good account, and of worthy aspirations which you will find some one to sympathise with, and share the upward career which I am sure is before you. I thought I could have done as much at one time, but I know now that I could not, and I should be only acting basely and wickedly towards you, though you will not think it more basely and wickedly than I am now acting with you, if I had gone on pretending that I could, and had burdened you for life with a soured and discontented woman. I have no more to say. "MARIAN."

"You do not repent of what you said to me this morning, Marian?" said Mr. Creswell, in a whisper, as he took her into dinner.

"On the contrary," she replied in the same tone, "I am too happy to have been able to gratify you by saying it."

"What has happened with Miss A.?" whispered Gertrude to Maud, at the same time; "I don't like the look in her eyes!"

And certainly they did look triumphant, almost insolently so, when their glances fell on the girls.

WILLS AND WILL MAKING.

WE continue our list of Will stories, commenced last week, with an eccentric justice in Norfolk, who died at the age of ninety, and required to be interred in his wedding shirt, his full suit and bag-wig, his silver buckles in his shoes, his cane in his hand, and black ribbons in his sleeve bands. Exactly a hundred years ago a widow Pratt died in George-street, Hanover-square, and left injunctions that her body was to be burned to ashes. Some testators, like Mr. Morgan, of Wales, have left thirty-one calves'-heads to the poor, to be given on his birthday; some have left money, to be given out annually on their own tombstones.

A Mr. Farstone, of Alton, having no relations, left his seven thousand pounds to the first man of his name who should wed a woman of the same name, and the money was to be paid down on the day of the marriage. Eccentric testators, however, are not likely to know that the courts look very sharply after their freaks, and are inclined if possible to revise such dispositions.

Readers of Boswell will recal that laborious lord of session (Lord Hailes), to whom Johnson used to send messages of turgid encomium. On his death, when he left an only daughter, no will could be found. This seemed a sad hardship, and though diligent search was made, it was unsuccessful. Miss Dalrymple was preparing to leave the house, and the heir-at-law about entering on the property which had come to him so unexpectedly, when some servants were sent over to another house of the late judge's in New-street, to put it in order. As they were closing the window-shutters, a paper dropped out from one of the panels, which proved to be the missing will. The surprise of this denouement, acting in two different directions, was excessive. But indeed the history of lost and found wills is one of the most exciting pages of romance. There are not a few families in the kingdom who owe success in some will litigation to the discovery by a dream of a missing paper, and instances have been so repeated, that, however the matter is to be explained, it is impossible to doubt their truth. Here is a well-authenticated one, told by the chief actor himself, a famous Liverpool preacher, to a friend of the writer's.

When the Liverpool preacher was a very obscure curate, he was taking a journey on horseback in very severe weather. He lost his way, and wandered about drenched, cold, and scarcely knowing what to do. Night came on, and he resolved to entrust the matter to his horse — dropping the reins on his neck. The horse soon brought him to a sort of lodge-gate, where he asked his way, and where he was invited to ride up to the great house, where he might perhaps find shelter. He did so, and was received in the kitchen with menial hospitality, and allowed to dry himself. During the evening, the butler mentioned to his master that there was a parson below, in a bad way indeed, and the master of the house politely sent down and asked him up. Further, he insisted on his staying to dinner and for the night. The clergyman consented, and went to bed in the conventional long chamber, and under the friendly shelter of the conventional four-poster; which, also true to the convention, he could not help likening to a catafalque. There he slept profoundly, while his weary and buffeted horse enjoyed his repose in a comfortable stable.

During the night the parson dreamed—dreamed that he was going over the house. He went up a stair with an oaken balustrade, and found himself entering an old picture-gallery, with portraits ranged down both sides. As he looked, one of them seemed to come out from the wall, and a paper dropped down, which, with the indistinctness of all dreams, seemed to leave the impression on him that it was of vast importance. This, he *knew*, without getting any

information on the subject. Then, of course, at the most critical moment he awoke.

The bright cheery breakfast-table followed. The horse was ordered round, and while it was being saddled, the host asked the clergyman would he not like to see the house. The parson was shown over, and saw much that he admired. As they were coming down he expressed his pleasure. The host grew downcast, and said he was afraid he should enjoy it but a very short time, as there was an action for ejectment coming on at the next assizes, and through the loss of a certain family paper, they were almost sure to be defeated.

The parson's dream then suggested itself, and he asked abruptly,

"Have I seen the whole house? Is there no picture-gallery?"

"No," was the answer. "Seen the whole house?—Stay—we *have* pictures up-stairs, and there is a large room——"

They went up again. At a turn they came to a stair which the parson seemed to recognise. At the top of the stair they entered an old long room, with pictures down the sides; the curate then knew where he was. He walked straight to a particular picture, moved it out, and behind it was discovered a sort of recess filled with papers; among them was found the missing deed.

A very curious problem recurs periodically. We hear of two members of a family—husband and wife, father and daughter—perishing together in some great calamity. The property of one passing, by will, to the other, it is necessary to prove which died first. On this point, which perhaps no one can decide, depends the rights of different parties. Two of these instances, one in humble life, the other in a higher station, add to the instances of noble behaviour in face of death. The humbler one first.

In the year 1814, Taylor, a staff-sergeant of artillery, was coming home with his wife from Portugal in the transport Queen. They had arrived at Falmouth, but a storm coming on, drove the vessel on a rock, where she was fast going to pieces. The sergeant was on deck as the vessel was parting, and in a loud voice he was heard to offer two thousand pounds to any man who would save his wife. This appeal having no effect, he went down himself and was never seen again. This wealthy artilleryman was possessed of about four thousand pounds, which he had willed to his wife, and it depended on which of the two died first as to whether it should go to his relatives or to hers. The Roman law was urged, which in absence of evidence, assumed that the man was the stronger, and more likely to live longer—that a woman was more likely to exhaust herself by screaming, and that a man's figure was more buoyant. It was urged for the woman that she was robust and hearty, while the sergeant was invalided and in wretched health. But the court declined to make any presumption, and decreed that the proof of survivorship lay on the woman, and that both died together.

The other case is very touching. A vessel called the Dalhousie was coming home from Australia, with a Mr. and Mrs. Underwood and their three children on board. Husband and wife, by some strange presentiment, had each made wills in each other's favour. The ship foundered, and a solitary sailor, named Reed, was saved. This tar gave a sketch of the last scene in a simple fashion, yet in the powerfully dramatic way that arises from simplicity. He described the family standing together, waiting quietly for the end. The vessel, he said, was nearly on her beam-ends. He was trying to get the boat clear, when he heard a scream from the mother—the little girl had been washed away. He looked round and saw them standing together. "They were all clasped together; the two boys had hold of their mother; *the father's arms were round all.* I don't believe it was a minute before a sea came and swept them all off. They seemed to go off all at once. *I don't think they were separated.* None of them ever came in sight again." It was decided here that this evidence was conclusive as to husband and wife dying together, and the doctrine now is that in such cases death is assumed to take place at the same moment.

The "books" are full of the strange risks and perils run by wills—craft of all shapes and sizes which are sent out upon the waves, from the huge vessel built on the most approved principles, by the best workmen, and of the best materials, warranted, its departed owner is assured, to stand any storm, to the little cockle-shell boat rudely put together in a few minutes, and made of a few planks hurriedly nailed up; the latter very often arriving quite safe, while the former gets among the breakers, and goes to pieces on legal rocks and sandbanks. Let us read one of these voyages and shipwrecks.

MRS. KELLY'S WILL.

A good many years ago, there used to come up to Dublin a disreputable unmarried old gentleman, named Kelly. He had large estates in the county Roscommon, where his movements were watched with all the interest of expectation by a number of spendthrift relations. He was fond, however, of coming up to his house in Merrion-square, whence, though past seventy, he went forth to indulge in the lowest and most degraded shapes of dissipation. At night the disreputable old gentleman used to totter forth, leaving his fine town mansion, and make his way to some notorious haunt. In one of these excursions he lost a pocket-book containing five hundred pounds in notes, and was agreeably surprised and delighted at the honesty of a young girl who came to him with it one morning. This creature's character would bear even less investigation than perhaps that of the worst of her friends and companions, and, young as she was, she had acquired great notoriety. Her name was Sarah Birch. She proved to be a woman of strong intellect and singular purpose, and her life, thus beginning in the mire, was to be the strangest.

The old gentleman must have been a man of

purpose and character in his way, for he had begun life with literally nothing, and ended it in possession of great wealth. He started, he told a friend, "with but one hundred pounds in the world, and of that he was *robbed by his cousin;*" and indeed the whole of this story gives us strange glimpses of the "old Ireland" lingering behind in the West.

In a short time the county of Roscommon was excited by learning that "old Kelly" had come down in true style, his postilions with white favours, this doubtful lady inside, and two more ladies of the same quality seated on the box. It was given out that he had married the lady seated inside, and a numerous party of relations was thrown into consternation by the announcement. Later on there was a ball given in the county-town, and the old gentleman had the hardihood to present himself with his new partner. The scene was long talked of, and it was remembered that the decorous ladies of the district, instead of requiring the intruder to be turned out, had themselves retired in disorder, and broken up the ball.

The relations did not know what to do, but they were no match for the strong-minded, determined woman. Her power was supreme, and strengthened every hour. She could do what she pleased with Kelly. The disreputable old gentleman seemed to grow more and more attached to her every day.

The relatives she was thus gradually depriving of all hope, were nearly driven frantic. They all seemed to be in a chronic state of bankruptcy; indeed the whole picture of the characters in this drama is most characteristic. One solicitor-relative owned that his circumstances "became embarrassed, and I was *necessarily* obliged *to remain at home, almost constantly, but not of necessity.* It was rather a retirement from public life." This exquisite description is given in all gravity and seriousness. The disreputable old gentleman wrote to an acquaintance, that he had seen in the papers "the severe beating my friend Mr. Gorman got, which I fancied was *only a wetting.* I am most anxious to hear, until," he adds, piously, "it be the will of the Almighty, he is recovered. I spoke to him when I saw him last to be guarded." The disreputable old gentleman was given credit for an illegitimate daughter, whom, under influences, he now altogether declined to acknowledge. This lady had married an Englishman, Mr. Yeatman, who, when the parties became inflamed against each other, was boldly impeached by Mrs. Kelly as a felon's son, and who himself was later convicted of crimes, "sentenced to transportation, and sent upon the seas." This pair lurked about the little country town, and laid plots to get at their wealthy relative. Once as he was riding, he was told that some one was waiting to see him on business, on the first-floor of some shop. But when he found himself face to face with them, he strode angrily down-stairs. They, however, swore lustily that he was affectionate, and became maudlin, bewailing the miserable bondage in which he was detained, and promising to do great things for them. When he got back to the house the old influence asserted itself. Later, this pair were said to have reappeared at Brighton, where the husband threatened serious charges, and required sixty thousand pounds as the price of silence. Then came a meeting in the street, and a charge of assault by the daughter against her own father, before the Brighton magistrates. The old man behaved with great intrepidity, refused to compromise, or to mind the usual intimations of its being "a painful case," and one which should be settled out of court.

All schemes failed. The old man, however, was growing more infirm and helpless, and the greedy relatives now begun to protest he was "weak," that he had been always known as "Mad Kelly," and that he was heard protesting he was in beggary, and would die of starvation. A sympathising friend took certainly what was a most original way of combating this delusion, and had a number of large joints of meat hung round the bed, which the friend said effectually quieted these apprehensions. But this success in treatment may be doubted, for the delusion of the patient related to *future* privation, and he might reasonably imagine, after the supply hung round him was exhausted, that destitution might still supervene. Perhaps it was through this symptom that a curious fancy came into Mrs. Kelly's head. The malignant relatives had gone so far as to state that no marriage ceremony had ever been performed, and that as soon as old Mr. Kelly departed, this question would be raised. To quiet these scruples, and to make assurance surer, they came up to town, and a mysterious second marriage was performed in St. Werbergh's Church. Some who came to make arrangements for this ceremony declared that they saw an old dotard sitting in an arm-chair, his head bent down, his body stooped, and apparently in stupid unconsciousness of what was going on about him. The scene in the church was dramatic, the bold, fearless woman standing beside this old dotard, whose head at the most critical part of the service wandered round absently, and had to be turned back by a friend, to face the clergyman.

The woman, meanwhile, had not forgotten her old tastes. She had taken a fancy to another solicitor, and had promised to marry him when old Kelly's demise, which must have been earnestly longed for by all parties, took place. To this gentleman she wrote with a strange mixture of affection, piety, and bad spelling.

"I always loved you. I beg you not to think me *fictous* or changeable so long as the Lord pleases to spare me in this world."

At last, however, his time came for the disreputable old gentleman, and he died. Then was produced a will made a few days after the second marriage, which gave everything to Mrs. Kelly. She was mistress in title as she had before been in deed. But now began the struggle. The relatives mustered strongly. A

cousin came forward to impeach the will as obtained by undue influence, and a speculative solicitor was found "to take it up." Then was illustrated what is called by good-natured courtesy "the glorious," but which should rather be termed the scandalous, uncertainty of the law. One learned judge, after interminable evidence had been taken under the old system of interrogatories, declared for the will. "The delegates" were appealed to, and reversed their brother's—a delegate himself—opinion. They then turned to the chancellor, and he reversed that of the delegates, and ordered a review of the whole matter, which, after a litigation of many years, ended in favour of the spirited, unconquerable, and unconquered Mrs. Kelly.

But before this result, there entered into the case what to the spectator is a bit of grotesque comedy, but what to the actors must have been a rather dismal piece of tragedy. The claimant was an elderly Miss Thewles, and amid the congratulations of her first success, a young and enterprising solicitor was encouraged by his friends to push his advances with the lady; and he prosecuted the matter with such spirit that his efforts were crowned with success. At this stage matters were considered to look very doubtful indeed, for the widow, and her best friends advised a compromise. She was quite willing, and a friend was entrusted with the negotiation, to whose credit she had first lodged a sum of no less than twenty thousand pounds. But she had now to deal with the new bridegroom, flushed with victory in the different fields of love and law, and he disdainfully declined not merely the sum offered, but even to *treat* at all upon the subject. The end was that he lost everything, was all but ruined, and went away to the colonies, leaving his elderly bride behind. But everybody in this case was to behave strangely. When the compromise failed, the ambassador turned round upon his patroness, and protested this twenty thousand pounds was a gift, that he was a donee, not a trustee, and an action had to be taken against him to make him disgorge; which action strangely, like everything else connected with this business, failed, and he was enabled to retain it

The last act now begins. Thus successful, this strong-minded and intrepid woman settled herself down to enjoy her power and her wealth, which was now said to amount to about ten thousand pounds a year, with some quarter of a million in money. She had estates in various counties in Ireland; she had her town houses in London, Dublin, and Brighton. She superintended everything herself. She gradually found out, and gathered about her various English relations, for all of whom she proposed "doing something," establishing nephews in life, and pushing them forward. One of these, a young man named Strevans, she had made her agent over a portion of her property; but he was a wild debauched youth, and she was disheartened and scandalised by his excesses. Round her gathered strange creatures, vulture like, waiting for the day when they should all be taken care of, for she was known to have made her will—"shady" attorneys chiefly, who gave her their doubtful help in the management of her affairs. Among these birds of prey raged secret jealousies and hatreds, and between one of them named Campion and the wild Strevans was a special animosity, founded on the former's protection of his patroness's interest, which he affected to believe was seriously damaged by the young man's behaviour. Even the inferior beings who were dependent on her—the stewards and labourers—seem to have been a lawless and disreputable set.

It came to the month of April, 1856, and she was down at her Westmeath estate, giving large employment to women and men, and preparing to build yet another mansion-house there. With her was the nephew, and the attorney Campion, who came down occasionally to look over the accounts. His jealous eye had discovered that the young man had not duly accounted for all the moneys that passed through his hands; and some recent excesses, which had been talked of, had fairly disgusted her. Her will was made in a truly business-like and satisfactory way, and its contents were pretty well known. Her estates she had divided fairly among her friends and relatives, taking care of every one in some shape. The nephew was given a small estate, and the attorney was provided for. She was determined to have these little defalcations ascertained: not from the sense of their loss, but, it would seem, as a matter of justice and fact, and intended using it as a lever to force her nephew to become steady, to marry, settle down, and accept an allowance from her in lieu of greater expectations.

The attorney went diligently through all the accounts, and on the last day of his stay was able to fix the loss at about three hundred pounds. She showed no displeasure, but the young man knew what her plans were. On the ninth of April they all three dined together at two o'clock, and after dinner the lawyer retired to finish his accounts. When the day was declining, towards five o'clock, Mrs. Kelly and her nephew walked down to look at the labourers. The house was on an elevated ground, whence all the fields sloped down. They walked towards the field, where there was a busy scene—a number of women and girls gathering up the stones and clearing the ground. This field was entered by a stile, and had a long wall running by one side of it. She directed these operations herself, and was talking to a girl named Bryan, when the last scene in Sarah Birch's most dramatic life set in.

Her nephew had walked away a little distance to speak to some of the workers, when attention was attracted to two very tall and masculine women, who had just got over the stile. They were dressed in long blue cloaks, with their faces muffled in crape, and came leisurely towards the mistress of the estate. The workers by whom they passed knew at once, by their stride and strange look, that they were men disguised in women's clothes. A sense as of

some coming horror seemed to have paralysed all. The unfortunate lady noticed them the last, and spoke with agitation to her companion, who said,

"Don't be frightened—they are only coming to frighten the children."

As they came nearer, she caught the girl's arm, let it go again, and with a scream tried to fly.

The unhappy woman had taken a few hurried steps when her foot tripped, and she fell. It is shocking to relate, that what followed took place in presence of about a score of people—in full sight of the dwelling house on the hill. The ruffians came up to her, and as she lay at their feet, one discharged a pistol into her ear; the other fired down into her head. They then, as it was described, "went off at a slow trot across the field," passed out of it, and were never recognised again, in the dock or on the scaffold.

The pitiful nephew had seen all this; but he could not do more than shout "*Aunt Jewel! what's this?*" He made a hesitating attempt to come forward, more from instinct than anything else; but one of the murderer's now "leadless pistols" pointed at him, checked his course, and he turned and made off home by a circuitous route.

The attorney was busy over his accounts when he rushed in with the news. The former started up, but the young man cried:

"Don't go out or you'll be shot—they are in the field yet!"

"And you let her be shot!" said the other.

The attorney went down to the field where she lay. Hideous sights met him there, one man sobbing,

"Oh, sir, her head is off!"

What added to the strangely dramatic scene, was the man of law going down on his knees beside the body, lifting up his hands to Heaven, and swearing that he would never rest till he had revenged the murder. A sort of steward followed his example, and made a similar singular vow of vengeance. Strevans had now come down again, and the attorney, looking at him steadily as he rose from his knees, said, "*This was well planned.*"

The nephew was arrested; and so was the attorney, much to his surprise. Suspicion, however, more directly pointed to the former, and certainly there were some strange incidents to justify that suspicion. The accounts were to be completed that day, and he knew the result was against him. It was believed that Mrs. Kelly was about to alter her will, and cut him off with a small sum in hand instead of a handsome provision in estates. There was some anxiety in him that she should come out on that fatal evening; and he was also said to be eager that the attorney should come also. It is but just to him to say, that these facts and suspicions were mainly founded on an information of his rival and enemy, couched in excited terms and reading more like a prosecutor's speech than a simple statement. It was also thought to be a bit of agrarian vengeance. The attorney, however, was soon released; no further evidence ever turned up; and the young man, after being duly called up, assize after assize, to renew his bail, was at last finally discharged. But the matter was not over yet. No one can rest under such an imputation, whether well or ill founded, and he was driven to try and clear himself in a court of law. The edifying spectacle then followed of this pair, from the witness-box, charging each other with the murder of their patroness, of both being cross-examined "severely" on that insinuation, and of both failing to persuade their jury. The attorney, now old and shattered, presented a piteous spectacle as he was subjected to this ordeal, with trembling head and hands and voice, and abundant maudlin tears.

The bulk of the property of this luckless woman passed to a doctor, who now enjoys it, and could afford to offer five hundred pounds reward for the discovery of the murderer. Such is the account of this curious career, which began so questionably and ended so dismally, and from which, without an affectation of being didactic, we may draw this moral, that the acquisition of wealth by any other than the regular slow and honourable means, brings with it but little enjoyment. The possessor is but a stranger in his own household, and invites the interested attention of sharks and harpies. This woman had to keep watch and ward over her property, to guard it against the very arts and attacks by which she herself had won it. In the end, it seemed safer to snatch it from her by bloody means. There is something piteous almost in this story of one who had fought a weary battle, from the slums upwards, against schemers, knaves, relations, and against law and lawyers, and in the end was only beaten by the savage agency of the pistol-bullet.

SEWING MACHINES.

We could fill a whole number of All the Year Round with the claims of the French to *every* modern scientific discovery. The last claim, put forth by M. Henri de Parville, on behalf of their invention of the sewing machine, we should scarcely have noticed here, but for the important remarks of that able writer on the imperfection of the implement as it stands.

First, in respect to the invention: It appears that, about 1825, there lived at Saint Etienne (a manufacturing town to the south-west of Lyons) a poor wretch of a tailor noted for his thriftlessness and eccentricity. So far from his customers increasing, the few he had dropped off one by one; which seemed to trouble him very little. He was rarely to be found at home on his board, and still more rarely did he call for orders. In 1827 he was held to have a bee in his bonnet, and in 1829 he went for downright crazy. This reputed madman, Barthélemy Thimonnier, the son of

a Lyons dyer, was born at Arbreste (Department of the Rhône) in 1793. He learnt tailoring, and worked at the trade first at Amplepuis and then at Saint Etienne. The manufacturers of Tarare get a great deal of crochet embroidery done in the mountains of the Lyonnais. Thimonnier, while watching the young women at work, conceived the first idea of the sewing machine. He brooded over it and worked incessantly at it for four long years, losing his credit, ruining himself, but triumphantly resolving the problem. In 1830 he took out a patent for an apparatus executing chain-stitch by mechanical means.

An inspector-general of mines, M. Beaunier, then residing at Saint Etienne, saw the machine, and at a glance comprehended its importance. He took the inventor to Paris. Thimonnier, one Ferrand, Germain Petit and Company of Paris, entered into partnership for working the apparatus. In 1831, there was to be seen in the Rue de Sèvres, a factory in which eighty wooden sewing machines were at work: they made soldiers' clothing by machinery. Now, machinery suppresses manual labour, and the workman looks no further than that; the plain fact strikes him, and he will hear no more. Thimonnier's sewing machines were broken in 1831, exactly as the first threshing machines were destroyed in England by riotous agricultural labourers.

Thimonnier ran away. A few months afterwards, M. Beaunier's death broke up the partnership with Germain Petit and Company. In 1834, Thimonnier returned to Paris, and used his machine to do tailoring work, at the same time trying to improve it. In 1836, reduced to utter poverty, he returned to his native town. He travelled on foot, says one of his biographers (M. Meyssin, of Lyons) with his machine on his back, and kept soul and body together by exhibiting its performance as a curiosity. Retiring to Amplepuis, he constructed several machines, and sold them with very great difficulty. In 1845, the original contrivance already made two hundred stitches a minute. At that period, an intelligent manufacturer, M. Magnin, of Villefranche, offered his co-operation, which was accepted; the partners sold machines at fifty francs (two pounds) each. In 1848, as testified by a patent, Thimonnier's machine executed three hundred stitches per minute; it embroidered, and sewed not only muslin but cloth, and even leather.

The revolution of February, 1848, checked the invention, just as it was gaining ground. Thimonnier sold his patent for England to a company at Manchester, and sent an improved specimen to the London Exhibition of 1851. The machine was delayed on the road, and did not reach its destination until after the jury had given their awards. After thirty years of struggle, toil, and want, Thimonnier died in poverty at Amplepuis, on the fifth of August, 1857, at the age of sixty-four. He shared the fate of many inventors. In 1832, in his eighty-first year, there expired at the Invalides, forgotten by all, the Marquis Claude Jouffroy d'Albans, the inventor of steamboats. On the tenth of August, 1807, the banks of the Hudson had rung with shouts in acclamation of Fulton's triumph. France, says M. de Parville, had sown; America reaped. It was not till ten years after America and England that France possessed her first steamer, the Elise, which for a while ran regularly between Rouen and Elbeuf. The sewing machine also, like the steamboat, after having been invented in France, returned thither from America. M. de Parville naturally regrets that the circumstance should be so frequently forgotten.

While Thimonnier was struggling with poverty, his machine was being improved across the Ocean. In 1845, an American, Elias Howe, took out a patent for a sewing machine with two threads, needle, and shuttle. In 1851 the jury at the Crystal Palace were registering Elias Howe's improvement, whilst Thimonnier's machine was lingering on the way. Soon, nothing was talked of but the American machines, and from 1855 the Continent was inundated with them. We now possess excellent English, French, and German models; the old world has taken her revenge. Well-made in general, simple, giving marvellous results of speed, sewing machines have found their way everywhere; into factories, work-rooms, drawing-rooms. They have brought about a complete revolution in the process of sewing. A good seamstress could make her twenty-five or thirty stitches per minute; a sewing machine will now do eight hundred. It is an increase of speed unparalleled in industrial history. The economical results immediately showed themselves by a general drop in the price of the most essential articles of clothing. We have all reaped the benefit of the invention; and how many have ever heard of Thimonnier's name?

And now for the physical and moral effects. The commercial results are palpable, immense; the hygienic consequences are the reverse of advantageous. For, the sewing machine is a tool, and so is the needle. But the needle is so light, so essentially feminine; the machine so heavy, so fatiguing to work! It illustrates the mechanical axiom, "What you gain in speed, you expend in strength." You get on wonderfully faster than with the needle, but you must employ quite a different degree of force to work this charming little implement. Has the idea ever struck anybody at any time or place?

One would hardly think it, to see poor girls fixed to their sewing machine as no other motive power ever was before. Riding-school horses are changed every three hours; omnibus horses every two hours; but here is no change. For ten or twelve hours a day, and sometimes more, the feet have to press alternately on the pedals, and the frame has to be shaken by the same continuous and regular movements.

The object of all machinery ought to be to replace manual labour by mechanical labour; but sewing by machinery leads to the very reverse.

It compels women to exert muscular efforts, to a degree never before required of them. It is an absolute contradiction to common sense. Instead of advancing in respect to hygienic considerations, we have actually gone backward. It has been seen that the implement beats the needle in speed, but by a greater expenditure of muscular power. Now, who supplies this muscular power? Who, except the workwoman? And do we fancy that muscular power is to be had gratuitously, without something to sustain it? Nothing in this world comes of nothing. Our bodies are machines, consuming fuel, quite as much as steam engines are. There is a close connection between the work turned off by the human machine, and the alimentary substances with which it is fed. If you increase the work, and do not wish exhaustion and death to be the consequence, you must also augment the daily allowance of food. If the labour required be excessive, overtaxing the supply of strength which the organisation is able to furnish, a morbid condition of the frame is speedily induced.

To the increased production which we so much admire, there corresponds, in fact, an increased expenditure of the workwoman's strength, which she must meet by a fuller and more generous diet. If the fatigue be more than *that* can resist, there ensues a derangement of health and a decay of the natural powers. We can only transform or transmit force; we cannot *create* the strength to lift a feather. Every mode of exercise we take, costs some grains of alimentary substance, and we cannot lift our hand to our head without an expenditure of the provision laid in at breakfast or dinner.

These facts are confirmed by experiment. In 1866, Dr. Guibout gave the alarm in a report to the Hospital Medical Society. While attending the Hospital Saint Louis, he had to prescribe for several workwomen, whose weakness and exhaustion were more than suspicious: these evils were evinced in pale and hollow cheeks, bowed backs, epigastric pains, &c. Afterwards, the same symptoms were noticed in the provinces as well as in Paris. Consumption even was a possible consequence. It cannot be denied that the sewing machine may threaten permanent danger to the workwoman's health and morality. She *must* be better fed than ordinary workwomen; if her earnings do not supply the means, great cities offer only too many other resources. Female prisoners who worked at sewing machines, have not been able to stand the fatigue with the ordinary prison diet. They were obliged to be allowed supplementary rations; broth and boiled beef every day, roast meat twice a week.

The danger is greatly diminished when the machine is only employed temporarily or occasionally. Still, there ought to be limits for delicate young persons. By the way, similar symptoms have been observed in young ladies who regularly practise the piano for several consecutive hours per day. With sewing machines, having ascertained the exact cause of evil, the remedy becomes easier to indicate. We must consider the sewing machine as a simple implement; and, like all implements rapid in their action, we must make it work by means of a motor.

In large work-rooms, like those of M. Godillot, where five hundred sewing machines are at work at once, the motive power employed is steam. Each workwoman, by means of a pedal pressing on the communicator of motion, can regulate the velocity of her machine, or stop it altogether. But in small establishments steam is inapplicable, still less in chamber work. What is wanted to make the sewing machine uninjurious to health, is to couple with it a motive power inconsiderable in size, to be set going or stopped at will, a supplier of artifical muscular power, dispensing with that of the workwoman. We want a sewing machine capable of setting itself agoing. The desideratum is now realised to such an extent that it is quite possible for everybody to have their automaton or self-acting sewing machine.

A French engineer, Monsieur H. Cazal, has invented a little electric motor which, by its combination with the sewing machine, resolves the problem. On touching a button, the machinery turns, exactly as if an invisible workwoman were treading the pedals. Electricity does the work, and the woman superintends it. A pile stuck in a corner, or concealed in a footstool, supplies the motive force required.

The workwoman, to work, must be liberally fed: the electric motor, too, must be supplied with victuals, and luckily its digestion is never out of order, while its appetite is considerable. The pile is its stomach, which assimilates zinc, exactly as the steam engine consumes coal. Electric work costs about thirty times as much as steam work; notwithstanding which, its expense is low enough to allow of its employment in domestic industry.

M. Cazal, by attaching his little motor directly to the implement, suppresses the ordinary modes of transmitting force by which much power is unavoidably lost. He also thus diminishes the first effort which has to be made to set the thing a going. Four Bunsen's elements, for instance, suffice to put the motor in action. Now each one of these consumes about the fifth of a pennyworth of zinc per hour, making the expense for a day about sevenpence halfpenny or eightpence. For those who want to work only several hours per day, a few pence cover the cost. Now if the workwoman, or her employer, remembers that she must spend more than that on extra diet to keep up her strength, it will be found that there is a manifest advantage in employing the electric motive power, not to mention the question of health. Moreover, there are times when mothers of families cannot without danger work at a sewing machine. At such periods, a self-acting machine will afford invaluable assistance. The machines, besides, are furnished with pedals, so that they can be set in action either by electricity or by human strength. Finally, the

electro-motor is so ingeniously contrived, that it will probably be found applicable to other things besides sewing machines.

THE CITY OF THE ANGELS.

THE CANONIGO.

"They call it," quoth the Canonigo, "Puebla de los Angelos; but, for my part," he continued, confidentially, "I don't think it would do this City of the Angels much harm if the Verdugo were to come hither, and hang every man, woman, and child at Puebla to a gallows forty feet high. Hombre!" went on the Canonigo, "I think Puebla would be all the better for it; for, look you," and here he sank his voice to a whisper, "everything that walks on two legs in this city, and, who is not a guerrillero—a brigand—is either a gambler, or a receiver of stolen goods."

These were hard words, indeed, to hear from a patriotic Mexican gentleman, and a dignified ecclesiastic to boot, concerning a city so dignified and illustrious as Puebla. But the Canonigo knew what he was about. It was at the little village of Amosoque, a few miles from our destination, that our clerical friend uttered the strictures, recorded above, on the character of the Poblanas. Now I knew nothing as yet of Puebla; but I should have been quite prepared to agree with anybody who had told me that a little hanging—with perhaps a trifle of drawing and quartering—would have done a world of good to the people who congregated round our carriage window at Amosoque.

"Mala gente! mala gente!" murmured the Canonigo, looking at the Amosoquians who trooped up to the coach window, and stared in at us with sad fierce eyes mutely eloquent with *this* kind of discourse: "I should like a wheel; I a horse; I that stout man's coat; I his hat; I his dollars; and I his blood." "Mala gente," said the Canonigo, drawing his head in somewhat abruptly, as an Amosoquian of very hungry aspect uttered the word "Caridad!" in a tone which far more resembled a curse than a request. "Por Dios, amigo," quoth the Canonigo, "I have nothing for you. Mala gente!" he concluded, sinking back on the cushions and taking a very vigorous puff at his cigar, "Mala gente"—which, being translated, may be accepted as signifying "blackguards all: a bad lot."

Whenever you halt in a town or village of Old Spain your equipage will be surely surrounded by silent, moody men, wrapped in striped blankets or tattered cloaks, and with shabby hats slouched over their brows, who will regard you with glances that are sad, but not fierce. But faded as is their aspect, they have a quiet, resigned mien, not wholly destitute of dignity. Yonder tatterdemalion of the Castiles seems to say: "I am destitute; but still I am a Don. Poverty is not a crime. I involve myself in my virtue, and have puffed prosperity away. I am bankrupt, but it was through being security for a friend. I am Don Dogberry, and have had losses. I held shares in the Filibusters' Company (limited). The company is being wound up, and another call on the contributories will be made the day after to-morrow. If you like to give me half a peseta you can."

But New Spain! But Amosoque! That small, wiry, leathery, sooty-looking fellow is a half caste. Watch him scowling at you in his striped serape—further south called a poncho—his huge coach-wheel hat like a cardinal's whitewashed, and minus the tassels; his loose linen drawers bulging through the slashes in his leathern overalls. Salvator might have painted him, but Salvator should have made some preliminary sketches in a Seven Dials slum and a Bowery whisky cellar, to get his hand in. The man of Amosoque utters nothing articulate save an occasional grunt of "Caridad!"; but his eyes are full of speech. They say, "Your throat is precisely the kind of throat I should like to cut. I have cut many throats in my time. I am a bankrupt, but a fraudulent one. My father suffered the punishment of the 'garrote vil;' and my brother-in-law is a garrotter in Puebla. Give me a dollar, or by all the saints in Puebla I, and Juan, and Pepe, and Fernan here will follow the coach and rob it."

Amosoque is a great mart for spurs. The "Espuelas de Amosoque" are renowned throughout Mexico, and the spur makers, I conjecture, allow the beggars to take the goods "on sale or return." They thrust them in, four or five pairs in each hand, arranged starwise, at the windows, reminding you, in their startling spikiness, of the hundred-bladed penknives with which the Jew boys used to make such terrific lunges at the omnibus passengers in the old days, at the White Horse Cellar. These spurs of Amosoque are remarkable for nothing but their length and breadth—the rowels are not much smaller than cheese plates; but you can no more get clear of the place without purchasing a pair of "espuelas," than you can leave Montélimar in Provence without

buying a packet of "nougat." I have forgotten the name of that village in Old Spain where fifty women always fly at you and force you to buy embroidered garters. A similar assault, though a silent one, is made on you at Amosoque.

But our mules are hackled to, again, and the mayoral has filled his jacket pocket with a fresh supply of pebbles to fling at their ears if they are lazy. Bump, bump, thud, thud, up the middle and down again. We are again travelling on the hard road. This kind of thing has been going on for many days; and this kind of village we have halted at over and over again. Ojo de Agua was very like Nopaluca; Nopaluca was very like Acagete; and all these were very like Amosoque. We are out of the dark defiles of the Cumbres — horrifying mountain passes, grey, jagged, arid, cataractless; no sierra caliente has greeted our eyesight since we left Orizaba. The open has been mainly desert, intolerable dust and caked baked clod producing nothing but the nopal and the maguey, the prickly pear and the cactus. The former is picturesque enough, and, besides, it yields the juice, which, fermented, the Indians and half castes call pulque, and on which they get swinishly intoxicated. An adult maguey is very stately to look upon; but goodness keep all nervous ladies and people given to dreaming dreams, and young children, from the sight of the Mexican prickly pear. The plant assumes the most hideously grotesque forms. It is twisted, and bent, and gnarled like metal scroll work which some mad giant has crumpled up in his fingers, in a rage. It is a tangle of knotty zigzags interspersed with the prickly fruit, which can be compared to nothing but the flattened faces of so many demon dwarfs, green with bile and thickly sown with bristles. The prickly pear, to me, is Bogey.*

Let me see, where was it, between Orizaba and this evil place of Amosoque, bristling with spurs and scoundrels, that we picked up the Canonigo. Ah! I remember, it was at Sant' Augustin del Palmar. We reached Sant' Augustin at about two o'clock in the afternoon, just as the diligencia from Mexico had drawn up at the door of the principal fonda, and precisely in time for the diligence dinner. Now I would have you to understand that the chief dish at the coach dinner in all regions Iberian, both on the hither and thither side of the Atlantic, and even beyond the Isthmus and under the southern cross, is the PUCHERO:* print it in capitals, for it is a grand dish; and that the puchero is the only thing in Old or New Spain concerning which tolerable punctuality is observed. You have heard, no doubt, of the olla-podrida as the "national" dish of Spain; but, so far as my experience goes, it is a culinary preparation which, like the rich uncle in a comedy, is more talked about than seen. While I was in Mexico city my eye lighted one day on a placard in the window of a "bodegon" or eating-house, in the Calle del Espiritu Santo, setting forth that on the ensuing Thursday at noon "una arrogante olla" would be ready for the consumption of cavaliers. I saw this announcement on Monday morning, and for three days I remained on tenter hooks expecting to partake of this arrogant olla-podrida. I concealed my intention from my hospitable host. I was determined to do something independent. I had travelled long in search of beef; there might be, in the arrogant olla, a bovine element; and the efforts of long years might be crowned at last with success. I went on Thursday; but the vinegar of disappointment came to dash my oil. "Hoy, no," said the keeper of the bodegon, "mañana se abra." There was to be no arrogant olla that day, there would be the next. Mañana means to-morrow; and to-morrow to a Spaniard means the Greek Kalends. I have never tasted an olla, arrogant or submissive.

But of the puchero I preserve the pleasantest remembrances. There is beef in it: boiled beef: the French bouilli, in fact. There is bacon. There are garbanzos (broad beans); and charming little black-puddings, and cabbage, and delicate morsels of fried banana. It is very wholesome and very filling; and there is no use in your complaining that an odour of garlic pervades it, because the room and the tablecloth and your next neighbour are all equally redolent of the omnipresent "ajo." The puchero (poured from its pipkin) is in a very big platter, and what you have to do is to watch carefully for the platter as it is passed from hand to hand, to take care that it is not diverted from

* It may be mentioned that the heraldic cognisance of the Mexican nation bears intimate reference to the prickly pear. The legend runs that Cortes the Conquistador, during his march to Mexico, descried an eagle perched upon a nopal; and when the country achieved her independence four centuries afterwards "the bird and bush" became the "Mexican arms."

* The names of both the national dishes of Spain are derived from the utensils in which they are served. A puchero is a pipkin, and an olla an earthenware pot. Podrida means simply "rotten"—observe the singular corruption of sense in the French "pot pourri," a vase full of dried roses and fragrant spices.

you by a dexterous flank movement of a cunning caballero manœuvring behind your back, or by the savage cavalry charge of the German bagman opposite. Seize the dish when you can, and hold on to it like grim Death with one hand, till you have filled your plate. Never mind if the lady next you looks pleadingly, piteously, upon you. She is the weaker vessel. Let her wait. Fill yourself with puchero, for you will get nothing else in the way of refreshment, save chocolate and cigars, for the next twelve hours. There is a proverb which justifies the most brutal selfishness in this regard, and which I may translate thus:

> He who lets puchero pass
> Is either in love, or asleep, or an ass.

Clutch it, then, for when it has once glided away you will never see it again.

For a wonder the puchero at the diligence dinner at Sant' Augustin del Palmar was not punctual. We had had soup; we had had frijoles (black beans fried in oil), we had had a seethed kid; but no puchero made its appearance. The traveller next to me, a stout, black-whiskered man, in a full suit of black velveteen, enormous gold rings in his ears, and a parti-coloured silk sash round his waist, grew impatient.

"Caballeros," he cried, after another five minutes' delay, "I am a plain man. I am a Catalan. Juan Estrellada is well known in Barcelona. But human patience has its limits. I propose that if the puchero is not at once brought in that we rob this house and throw the landlord out of window." The proposal was a startling one; but the Catalan looked as if he meant it; and I was much moved to remark that a murmur seemingly not of disapprobation ran round the table. A gentleman in a cloak, two guests off, remarked gutturally, "Es preciso;" which may be taken as equivalent to "ditto to Mr. Burke," and to an opinion that robbing the establishment was the right kind of thing to do. You are so continually falling among thieves in Mexico that your moral sense of law grows blunted, and you feel inclined when people come to you for wool, to send them away shorn. Fortunately for the landlord the majority of the guests were philosophers, and had betaken themselves to smoking; and, fortunately for ourselves, just as the Catalan seemed to be preparing to put his resolution to the vote two sallow Indian boys came staggering in with the charger of puchero between them, and we fought for the meal like so many wolves, and I didn't come off the worst, I can assure you.

It was when I had secured, with great internal joy and contentment, the last remaining black-pudding in the dish, that I noticed that my right-hand neighbour—the Catalan was on the left—had suffered the puchero to pass. He told me that he ate but once a day; that he preferred to dine at six or seven; and that this was a fast day, too, and that he must keep his "ayuno." I had noticed him, when we alighted, clad in a black cassock and a tremendous "shovel"—which brought the Barber of Seville and Basilio to my mind at once, trotting up and down, saying his breviary, and puffing at a very big cigar. This was our Canonigo. The good old man! I can see his happy, beaming face now, his smile, calm as a mountain pool environed by tall cliffs, his clear, bright, trusting eyes. I can hear his frank, simple discourse: not very erudite, certainly, often revealing a curious inexperience of the world and its ways, but infinitely full of candour, and modesty, and charity. He held a prebendal stall in the cathedral of San Luis Potosi, to which he was now returning, viâ Puebla and Mexico city, having journeyed down to Jalapa to see a brother, in high military command, who lay sick in that unwholesome city. I call him "our" Canonigo, for my friend and travelling companion, who had been separated from me by stress of company at the inn dinner-table, rejoining me, when we went into the colonnade to smoke, recognised the prebendary of San Luis Potosi as an old friend, and embraced him affectionately. The old gentleman was travelling in a rusty old berline of his own, but gave heartrending accounts of the hardships of the road he had endured since he left Jalapa. The post-houses were, indeed, very short of mules, to begin with; some thousands of those useful animals having been impressed by the French commissariat and transport corps. We had been tolerably successful in the way of mules, simply because my friend, among his other attributes, was an army contractor, and had most of the post-masters under his thumb; but the poor Canonigo had been frequently left for hours, destitute of cattle, at some wayside venta. It is not at all pleasant, I assure you, so to cool your heels and your coach wheels, while the Indian hostess sits on the ground, tearing her long black hair, and wringing her sinewy brown hands, and crying out that the Mala Gente — the brigands—are

in the neighbourhood, and will be down in half an hour, to smite everybody, hip and thigh.

Nothing would suit my host but that the Canonigo should take a seat in our carriage, and be of our party up to Mexico. The good priest was nothing loth, for he owned that he was dreadfully frightened of the brigands, who had been committing frightful atrocities lately on the Jalapa road. I might have mentioned to you, ere this, that we had brought with us from La Soledad a sufficiently imposing escort, in the shape of an entire company of French infantry, who journeyed with us on the "ride and tie" principle; half of them crowded inside and outside a kind of omnibus we had picked up in the post office at Orizaba, and half of them hanging on to the wheels—the omnibus often required pushing up hill or dragging out of a rut—or riding on the mules, or trudging through the sand or over the pebbles with their shakoes on the points of their bayonets, and their blue cotton handkerchiefs tied round their shins, with, perhaps, a damp plantain leaf superadded. These were the merriest set of fellows I ever met with, and they laughed and smoked and sang songs and capered all the way up to Mexico. They never asked us for drink money, and were uniformly respectful, polite, and cheerful. They had a little boy-soldier with them—an "enfant de troupe" in training to be a drummer—who was their pet and plaything and darling, and for whom, when he was tired of riding in or outside the omnibus, they would rig a kind of litter, made of knapsacks and ammunition blankets laid on crossed muskets, and with a canopy above of pocket-handkerchiefs tied together and held up by twigs. And they would carry the little man along, the soldiers singing and he singing, with a "Tra la, la! Tra la, la!" and the rest of the company beating their hands in applause from the top of the 'bus. There were but two officers with the company—the captain, who rode with us, and a sub-lieutenant, who preferred occupying the box seat of the longer vehicle. The captain was a pudgy little man, who, his stoutness notwithstanding, wore stays. He had been in Algeria, and, according to his showing, whenever he and Abd-el-Kader met, there had been weeping in the Smala and wailing in the Douar. He had been through the Crimean campaign, and, not very obscurely, insinuated that he, and not Marshal Pellisier, should, if the right man had got his deserts, have been made Duke of Malakoff. In fact, the fat little captain would have bragged Major Longbow's head off. He overflowed with good humour, however, and had a capital baritone voice. The sub, on the other hand, was a moody gaunt man, whose solitary epaulette seemed to have made him at once low-spirited and lopsided. It was as well, perhaps, that he did not form one of our party; for he evidently hated his captain with great fervour, and when they met, off duty, there was generally a squabble. "I know my duty, but I also know my rights," the sub used to mutter, looking fixed bayonets at his superior officer. He was scrupulously attentive to his duties, however, and never missed saluting his pudgy chief. I think the captain would have been infinitely rejoiced had the omnibus toppled over one of the yawning precipices in the Cumbrera, and had the dismal chasm comfortably engulfed that cantankerous sub-lieutenant.

But the Canonigo had a berline. Well; that was very soon got rid of. The postmaster, who was also landlord of the fonda where we dined—I remember that he expressed a hyperbolical wish to kiss my hands and feet at departing, and that he obliged us with two bad five-franc pieces in change for the napoleon we tendered him—would have none of the canonical equipage. "Vala nada," it is worth nothing, he said contemptuously. He hoped that the Canonigo would leave it "until called for," and that he would never call for it. But he was not destined to profit by the relinquishment of the vehicle. At first I suggested that it should be affected to the use of the cantankerous sub-lieutenant, and that fatigue parties of light infantry should be harnessed to the pole, and drag it; but this proposal did not meet with much favour—especially among the light infantry—and the sub himself vehemently protested against making his entrance into Mexico "before his chiefs," in a carriage, which he declared to be fit only for a quack doctor. "There may be those," he remarked, with a sardonic glance at the baritone captain, "who would like to play Dulcamara, or imitate Mengin in a Roman helmet, selling pencils in the Place de la Concorde; for my part, I know my duties, and I know my rights." In this dilemma Pedro Hilo was sent for. Pedro, a rather handsome half-caste, was the administrador or steward to the lordly proprietor of a hacienda—a maguey plantation in the neighbourhood. He was accustomed to buy everything, even, as my

friend hinted, to the portmanteaus, wearing apparel, and other spoils of travellers who had been waited upon in the stage coach by a select body of the Mala gente. Pedro came, saw, and purchased. He was a man of few words. "Twenty dollars"—*pesos fuertes*—he said, and he drew a gold ounce from his sash and spun it into the air. "Arriba!" cried Pedro Hilo, "Heads." Heads it was, and the administrador stuck to his text of twenty dollars. A doubloon—scarcely four pounds—is not much for a berline, albeit the thing was wofully the worse for wear; but what was to be done with it? The bargain was concluded, and the Canonigo pocketed the gold ounce.

As we were leaving Sant' Augustin del Palmar, our omnibus escort making a brilliant show with their scarlet pantaloons and bright guns and bayonets, we passed the determined Catalan, who was girding himself up to ascend the roof of the downward-bound diligence. "I wish we had a few soldiers with us," he remarked, as he took in another reef of his parti-coloured sash. "A prod from a bayonet now and then might remind the postilion that it is his duty to drive his mules, and not to go to sleep under his monstrous millstone of a hat. Who ever saw such a sombrero save upon a picador in the bull-ring? In Barcelona such hats would be put down by the police. I have paid for my place in the interior," he continued, "but the malpractices of the postilion and the mayoral—who, I am assured, is in league with all the gangs of brigands between here and Cordova—can no longer be tolerated. I intend to mount the roof; and the first time that pig-headed driver goes to sleep again, I propose to myself to blow out his brains." So he went away, significantly slapping a pouch of untanned leather at his hip, and which I surmise contained his Colt's revolver. A determined fellow, this Juan Estrellada from Catalonia, and the very man to be useful in a street pronunciamiento. I fancy that he was somewhat nettled that no practical upshot should have followed his proposal to rob the fonda and throw the landlord out of window, and that he was anxious, before he reached Vera Cruz, to do something, the memory of which posterity would not willingly let die.

The Canonigo was excellent company, but his excessive temperance somewhat alarmed me. His "desayuno"—literally breakfast—would be taken at about four o'clock in the morning; for we always recommenced our journey at daybreak. Then he would take a cup of chocolate—a brown aromatic gruel mixed thick and slab—with one tiny loaf of Indian corn bread. And nor bite nor sup would he take again until sunset. The worst of it was that we were not always sure of finding supper when we reached the town or village where we had elected to stay the night. The Canonigo, however, seemed totally indifferent to our lighting upon an Egypt without any corn in it. His supper was always ready, and it seemed to serve him in lieu of dinner, and lunch, and all beside. He produced his grass-woven cigar-case and begun to smoke. Not papelitos, mind. Everybody in Mexico—man, woman, or child, Spaniard, half-caste, or Indian—inhales the fumes of tobacco wrapped in paper all day long. But the Canonigo was a smoker of puros, the biggest of Cabañas. They didn't make him sallow, they didn't make him nervous; and he never complained of headache—at least through smoking. On one occasion the worthy gentleman made the confession, "Tengo mala cabeza"—My head is bad. It was on the night before we arrived at Amosoque. We chanced to put up at a venta kept by a Frenchman, whose wife was a capital cook, and whose cellar was, moreover, stocked with capital wine. He gave us an excellent supper, and we subsequently "cracked"—I believe that is the correctly convivial expression—sundry bottles of that very sound Burgundy wine called Moulin-à-vent. Well, we were four to drink it, and the temperate canon would scarcely count as one. He had a thimbleful, however—two thimblefuls, perhaps—nay, a bumper and a half—and the cockles of his good old heart were warmed. In his merriment he sang a wonderful song, setting forth how a donkey, wandering in a field, once fell upon a flute in which a shepherd had "left" a tune. The donkey trolled, and the tune "came out;" whereupon "Aha!" brays the conceited animal, "who shall say that donkeys cannot play the flute?"

Then the Canonigo, merging into another mood, like Alexander at his feast, began to tell us about the saints—of the wonders worked by St. Lampsacus and St. Hyacinth, St. Petronilla and St. Jago of Compostella. And then he fell asleep, and I can't help thinking that he woke up the next morning slightly flustered about the "cabeza," and that the Moulin-à-vent might have had something to do with the severity with which he spoke about the in-

habitants of the City of the Angels. "However," I said, as we drove into Puebla, "we shall see—we shall see."

A PLEA FOR BARE FEET.

I SAW in the newspapers, not long ago, a piteous appeal from a clergyman in one of the metropolitan east-end parishes—in behalf of the poor, and especially of the little children—who had, as the reverend gentleman pathetically asserted, "scarcely a shoe or stocking to their poor little feet." Now, as I went barefooted myself when a "wee callant," as most Scottish lads and lasses do in the rural districts, whether their parents be rich or poor, or of the decent middle class, I bethought myself that much might be said on behalf of bare feet for young children, whether as regarded health, cleanliness, beauty, or economy.

The late Admiral Sir Charles Napier, once said in my hearing, that until he was twelve years of age, he never wore shoe or boot unless he went into a town; and that he was always glad to get back into the country again and take off the encumbrance from his feet and legs. Sir Charles was proud of his agility, and when close upon three score years and ten, could dance the Highland Fling and the Gillie Callum, with a grace and alertness, which men young enough to be his grandsons might have envied. He attributed much of his vigour to his early training, and to the fact that his feet had been left in his childhood and youth to the wholesome regimen of Scottish out-door life, to develop themselves as nature intended. Sir Charles Napier's experience was not peculiar, as many a sturdy Scot in every part of the world can testify. Every one who has travelled, either in the Highlands or the Lowlands, must have noticed the legs bare and shapely, and the neat ankles and feet of the lads, and especially of the lasses in the glens, and on the moors, and in the streets of the towns and villages; and if he were a reader of Robert Burns, have thought upon the lines, where he describes, in the guise of a rural maiden, the genius of Caledonia, without shoe or stocking, as a spirit should be.

> Down flowed her robe o' tartan sheen,
> Till half a leg was scrimply seen,
> And such a leg! My bonnie Jean
> Alone could peer it!

Most children in rural Scotland are innocent of all patronage of the craft of St. Crispin, and love, as the immortal song says, to *paidle* in the burns that all over the mountain land are as plentiful as meadows in England.

"Paidle?" exclaims the English reader—"what is *paidling?*" Nothing, my friend, but paddling about in the water with bare feet—a very favourite diversion with the children of the glens and the mountains, and the recollection of which, when brought to mind in a company of Scotsmen by the singing of what may be called their national song, invariably arouses their enthusiasm, and fills them with patriotic emotion.

It can scarcely be denied that a bare foot and leg is a more picturesque object than a foot with an old, patched, down-trodden boot or shoe, and a dirty darned stocking. But for young people the bare foot has other than artistic and æsthetic recommendations, and much may be said in favour of its economy, and, what is far more important, of its healthfulness. Nothing in the back slums of English cities is more suggestive of squalor and misery than the unsuccessful attempts of the poor to be decently shod. A ragged coat or gown is less suggestive of extreme want than the forlorn boots and shoes of the children, and the filthiness of their stockings. And yet the poor of England must spend a considerable portion of their scanty earnings in the attempt to procure what custom, habit, use, and the general consent of society, agree to think indispensable pieces of attire. If it be estimated that the number of poor children under twelve years of age living in the rural districts and cities of England is three millions—a very moderate calculation—and that each child costs five shillings a year for such poor boots, shoes, and stockings as its parents can purchase, we have a sum of no less than seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds per annum expended for a purpose which the children of the poor Scotch, as well as the Irish, neither think essential nor agreeable; and if the annual sum be multiplied by twelve, we have no less than nine millions of pounds sterling lost to the parents, without any real advantage to the children. Among the poorest of the poor, would it not be an advantage if the share contributed by them to this large total of wealth were expended in bread and butter, and the other food required, or if a little share of it went to pay the school fees? There is no greater reason in nature why the feet should be covered than the hands or the face; and a handsome foot is, as everybody knows, as pleasant an object as a well-shaped hand. And if the hand could only be cramped by the glove a quarter as much as the foot is cramped by the shoemakers, there would scarcely be a pretty hand left in all England, unless it belonged to some strong-minded person of either sex who was bold and firm enough to set fashion at defiance, and to refuse to outrage the simplicity of nature.

As regards health, grace, and agility, we have but to ask ourselves whence come corns and bunions, and how continually the sufferers from these painful callosities, are prevented by the torture they inflict, from taking the walking exercise which is alike the cheapest, the most healthful, and the most agreeable, to be convinced that of all the handicrafts that minister to the wants and the comforts of man, that of the shoemaker could be most easily and advantageously dispensed with. In England, among rich and poor alike, the normally shaped foot of an adult is very seldom to be seen, as any doctor or surgeon can testify out of his experience. In fact, the feet of most men and women are deformed, and the great toe forced from its natural position in a curve towards the little toe, which, in like

manner, is curved inward. Were it not for the respite and the liberty accorded at night—which mitigate but do not remove the evil—the feet of Englishmen and more especially of Englishwomen, who cramp them in order that they may appear small and pretty, would be as little serviceable for wholesome exercise as those of the Chinese ladies, whom we all agree to laugh at; seeing the mote in our neighbour's eyes, but not in our own. It has been cynically suggested that the boot and shoemakers are in league with the chiropodists and doctors to damage our health by means of our feet; and that they are allowed a per-centage by the profession, for the callosities which they create by the faulty construction of our nether integuments. But cynics are privileged to believe the worst of everything and everybody; and doubtless the Crispins, great and small, would be quite as willing to make boots and shoes on natural principles, so as to allow for the healthful play and motion of the foot, as to make unnatural ones, if Fashion and Custom would but run in that direction. But Custom is like the mountain, not to be moved by the blast of a trumpet; and Fashion is more obstinate in having its own way, in spite of reason and remonstrance, than all the mules, pigs, and asses that ever existed since the creation of the world.

I end in the spirit with which I began. Better a clean hand than a dirty glove; better bare feet than clouted shoon and ragged stockings; and better, far better, feet such as Nature intended, than the feet which we owe to Fashion and the bootmakers.

THE BROWN-PAPER PARCEL.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

Troubles and cares had vanished like a dream of the night, when Mary awoke before dawn, to hear her own dear village bells pealing out their welcome to Christmas Eve, and awoke to the glad consciousness that she was really at home. "Rejoice in the Lord daily, and again I say rejoice," was the text that rose in her mind, setting itself to the tune of those joy-bells all the time she was dressing, with noiseless movements not to disturb the sleeping Cilla. Her morning prayer over, she stole downstairs, and betook herself to the kitchen, where the one sleepy little school-girl who formed the whole of the domestic staff was lighting the fire. When Mr. Mackworth came down, it was to hear his daughter's happy voice singing carols, as she bent all her energies to the arrangement of as tempting a breakfast as the simple materials were capable of making. Mrs. Mackworth, resting in the happy assurance that "her eldest" was now at home to see to everything, was able to enjoy an extra hour of well-earned rest. When Cilla appeared, shivering and miserable, long after every one else had begun breakfast, even her piteous little face brightened at sight of the daintily spread breakfast table and the good fire; and she condescended to express approval of the crisp toast which Mary had prepared for her. It never occurred to any one, apparently, that her appetite might have been better, and her hands and feet less frozen, if she likewise had been bestirring herself to help in the thousand and one household tasks which there were so few to perform. Mary would have been the last to entertain so sacrilegious and disloyal an idea; for, ever since she was herself a sturdy brown child of six, and Cilla a delicate golden-haired fairy of three, she had learnt to consider that hers was the useful, and her sister's the ornamental, department in life—a theory which the little lady herself had thoroughly adopted. It was as a matter of course that she sank after breakfast into the solitary arm-chair, with her feet on the fender, looking all that was graceful and pretty (in spite of rather untidy hair, and clothes which would have been the better for a little more brushing and mending) while her mother betook herself to her eternal mending of hose and clothes, and Mary flitted about, here, there, and everywhere, in her oldest dress, neat through all its shabbiness, rapidly and quietly establishing order and comfort, wherever she went.

There is no need to write in detail the history of the next few days. The curate's family came in for no Christmas gaieties, and for a very scanty amount of Christmas cheer: but they were busy in ministering to the comfort and pleasure of all the poor around them, and even Cilla roused up into fitful interest.

Each busy day was followed by a cheery evening. The curate would then rouse himself out of his usual gravity, and prove the truth of his children's old saying, that, when he liked, nobody could be such fun as papa. And Harry and Mary and Cilla all chattered at once, and the gentle mother smiled and listened, and Jack and Laurry got between everybody and the fire, and were ordered to bed, and refused to go; and altogether it was very pleasant. For whatever their faults might be, these people thoroughly loved and believed in each other, and even Cilla would with all her heart have endorsed the proverb, that "Home is Home, be it never so homely."

"Mary!" she exclaimed one darkening afternoon, nearly a week after Christmas Day: "here is this mysterious brown-

paper parcel lying on the chimney-piece. I have been dying all this afternoon to open it. Wasn't I honourable not to do it?"

Mary had just returned from some parish visiting, and Cilla, who considered herself to have a cold, was lounging in the arm-chair with a novel which Mrs. Halroyd had lent her governess to read on the journey home.

"Oh! let us open it by all means," Mary said, "only I will light the candle first, and draw the curtains, my dear; you must be killing your eyes reading by fire-light!"

As she trimmed the fire, and proceeded to close the shutters and light the candle, Cilla seized the parcel and attacked the string. Of course she could not break it, and she began a raid on Mary's work-basket, but her sister stopped her. Not even to gratify Cilla's curiosity would Mary allow her best pair of scissors to be spoilt by cutting string.

"Particular old thing!" Cilla called her, with a little impatient shrug.

"But my dear, my best scissors! my only useable pair! If you'll wait one minute till I light the candle, I'll fetch a knife from the kitchen."

Cilla turned it in her mind whether to go herself, but gave up the idea with a shiver, and applied herself to unfastening the knots.

"What do you suppose it can be, Mary? A fairy godmother's gift perhaps—eh?"

"A wishing-cap," said Mary, laughing. "Oh! dear, what a useful possession that would be, Cilla. It shouldn't be a case of black puddings with us."

"Nice rooms and pretty things, and a pony carriage that I could drive myself," said Cilla, with a sigh through all her jesting speech.

"A living for papa, and a commission for Harry, and Harrow or Rugby for the boys!"

"And what for yourself? For your very own self?"

"Quite myself, and nobody else mixed up with it? Really, I don't know. I am very lucky, I think I have everything. Oh! I suppose I should give up governessing, if I were quite sure my dear old Archie would get somebody for his governess who wouldn't be cross to him over those sums of his."

"And to go to the Nettlehurst ball? Come, Polly, I've heard you wish for that."

"Ah! to be sure! I forgot: and to be quite convinced that my polite unknown did not catch cold. There, Cilla," as she finished putting the room into its usual evening trim, "your patience shall be rewarded! I am going to fetch a knife."

"No, you need not: I have undone this knot now: the first I ever undid in my life, I think. Now, Polly!"

Mary came and knelt by her as she broke the seals, and unwound the packthread. Out fell a tightly folded roll of thin white paper.

Cilla gave a little half-laughing cry of disappointment: but Mary knew better the look of the article, and she pounced on it with an exclamation of astonishment.

"Bank-notes! how strange! Where can they possibly come from? One, two, three, ten notes! Oh, Cilla, how wonderful!"

"What are they? Five-pound notes? Ten-pound notes?"

"Thousand pound notes! Ten of them, Cilla!" and the brown eyes looked as if they never would close again.

"A wishing-cap indeed!" cried Cilla.

Mary carried off the bank-notes to the dingy little second sitting-room, where her father was generally to be found at this hour: for under such tremendous circumstances, Saturday though it was, she ventured to interrupt his sermon.

Mr. Mackworth was as surprised as his daughter, but less bewildered, and considerably less excited.

"Has it not struck you, my dear, that this money may belong to the gentleman who was so polite to you? Don't you think it probable that he may have left it in the cab, and that you may have taken it out with your other parcels?"

"But, papa, would any one carry about ten thousand pounds in this way? And then forget it? It doesn't seem credible."

"It is the only explanation I can see, however. And I think we must try to draw up an advertisement for the Times, which the owner would understand and nobody else. And now give me these things, and let me finish my sermon in peace."

Mary obeyed; but her father called her back to caution her against talking on the subject before the children or the servant.

"It is just as well," he said, "that all the world should not know that we have ten thousand pounds locked up in my table drawer." So nothing was said about it during tea; but when the boys were gone to bed, little else was talked about, and everybody had some solution of the mystery to offer, in which nobody else could see any probability.

"We shall be like some of Miss Edgeworth's goody poor people," said Cilla; "we shall send back the bank-notes, and be re-

warded for our integrity, and turn into a deserving family. Shan't we, Mary?"

"Or the unknown will assure us that he intended it as a delicate little attention to Mary, and will beg her acceptance of the token," said Harry.

"My dears," urged the curate, "we have had almost enough of that joke; family wit is all very well, but it becomes depressing when the sun is allowed to go down upon it."

"Has it depressed you, old Polly?" said her brother. "You are all in the downs this evening."

"Well, I think I am," said Mary. "If this money really belonged to that kind man, I can't bear to think what a scrape his good-nature must have got him into."

"His gross carelessness rather," said Mr. Mackworth; "probably some banker's clerk. No doubt he has lost his place for it. Serve him right, I should say."

The next day was Sunday, and the ladies of the family betook themselves to the school for the space of time between breakfast and church.

Harry and the little boys joined them at church, and Mary soon saw that her eldest brother was suffering under some unusual excitement. The moment the sermon was over, he was out of church like a shot, and she found him waiting at the door with a newspaper in his hand. He seized her arm, and drew her off a little way, among the tombstones, while he eagerly explained:

"Look here, Polly, it is such a queer go! I was looking over the paper old Murch lent us this morning, and I lit on this advertisement. Look."

Mary read:

"Five hundred pounds reward.

"Left in a Hansom cab, at the door of Grueby's Library, on the 21st ult.; a small brown paper parcel fastened with twine and with four seals in red wax, bearing the initials 'V. L.' in a monogram. Any one bringing the same with the contents intact to Messrs. Langley and Co's Bank, Lombard Street, City, or to the same Bank, High Street, Brigham, shall receive the above reward."

Before Harry and Mary had exchanged a word of comment, the curate was upon them, astonished and scandalised at seeing them apparently deep in the Times within the churchyard precincts. Mary gave him the paper, and pointed out the paragraph.

"That's a comfort," was his first exclamation: "now I am saved the trouble and expense of advertising. We must not lose a moment in restoring the money. I am doubtful whether it is not our duty to take it to Nettlehurst. I know Mr. Langley is there. It is not a very Sunday-like bit of business, but I can't bear to keep such a sum in our cottage with no proper lock-up place for it."

"Oh! by all means, papa," cried Mary, eagerly; "and might not I go with you? If that poor clerk has got into trouble, I might perhaps say something for him; at all events I might explain how it all happened; might I not?"

Mr. Mackworth decided that Mary's presence would be desirable, and they hastened home to eat a hurried dinner before setting out.

Evening service at Farley was not till six o'clock, so there was ample time for the walk to Nettlehurst, as both Mary and her father were quick walkers, and thought nothing of the three miles out, and three back, even in the dirt and gloom of a raw January afternoon. Mary was well defended from the weather, and enjoyed thoroughly the rare treat of a tête-à-tête with papa. The walk itself too was enjoyable. It lay through country which would have been lovely in summer and which was picturesque even in the dead of winter; the first part through flat green fields guarded by very impracticable stiles, and then they emerged into the road, which gradually mounted, until plantations and well-kept fences on each side of it showed that they were passing through some gentleman's grounds.

"Here is Nettlehurst," said Mr. Mackworth as, after following a low park wall for some distance, they found themselves close to tall iron gates, spick and span, and fresh and neat, as was the picturesque lodge, its trim garden, and the broad carriage drive. A woman, as tidy as everything else, in her Sunday garb, admitted them, and they walked on through well-kept plantations first, and then through a small park, somewhat dreary now, with its tufts of blackened heather and dead bracken. A flower-garden was laid out close to the house, which was a picturesque building, all gable ends. The flower-beds were filled with branches of holly-evergreen, a device which neither Mary nor her father had ever seen before; and all along the south front of the house was a glittering conservatory giving a peep at gorgeous hues and graceful trailing forms, a welcome contrast to the bleak desolation of the ordinary out of door world.

"Very nice all this is," said the curate, approvingly; "you should have seen this place as I did in old Hathaway's time, when I was taking Morton's duty. Everything was going to wrack and ruin!"

Their ring at the bell was answered by a tall footman, whose gorgeous appearance made Mary blush for her own splashed stockings and her father's threadbare coat. But he was affable, though "not sure that his master was at home," and on hearing that they came on business, he gave them over to a still more sublime personage out of livery, who, having taken Mr. Mackworth's card, conducted them through a small carpeted hall and long passage, and left them in the library.

CHAPTER IV.

It seemed to Mary Mackworth as if she had suddenly entered a different world: a world of soft carpets and sweet perfumes, and warm summer air: the sort of world which such creatures as Cilla ought naturally to inhabit, but which was quite out of keeping with her own muddy boots and dank cloak, and with the untidy state to which the winter wind had reduced her bonnet and hair. She was glad to see a mirror in which she could arrange those fluttering ribbons and rebellious locks. A very few touches made her feel tidy again, so she rested quite content, though not at all aware that she was looking much more than tidy, and that her three miles uphill walk, through wind and cold, had given a glow to her gipsy colouring, and a brightness to her clear dark eyes, which made her, for the moment, quite sparklingly pretty.

Her father walked to and fro, admiring and approving.

"Very nice! very nice! Thorough good taste this man must have. All new and fresh, and yet grafted so cleverly on the style of the old place, that there is no jarring in the fitness of things. And all the old books here, I see, and well cared for now! Not as it used to be in Hathaway's time, when it was enough to break one's heart to see the way in which they were used."

His speech, which was almost a soliloquy, broke off as the door opened, and Mary started to her feet and well-nigh exclaimed aloud with surprise, as she found herself face to face—not with the portly middle-aged banker whom she had expected to see, —but with her unknown friend, the hero of the Hansom cab!

The recognition was mutual, for he started and coloured almost as vehemently as Mary; while the curate, at a total loss to account for these manifestations, stared from one to the other in blank astonishment.

Mary was the first to recover self-possession. "I am very glad to see you," she said, holding out her hand. "Papa, this is the gentleman I told you of, who was so very kind to me when I was caught in the snow."

"I am very glad to have this opportunity of thanking you," said Mr. Mackworth, "and I must apologise too for paying you a business visit on Sunday: but I considered it a case of necessity. I think Mr. Langley advertised some days ago for a parcel which, I fear, must have been lost on the occasion when you were so good-natured to my daughter."

"Yes, I did advertise," said the gentleman. "I am Mr. Langley," he added with a smile, as he saw that both father and daughter looked bewildered. "I advertised and offered a reward. Five hundred pounds."

"The reward will not be necessary," said Mr. Mackworth, as he put his hand in his breast-pocket. "I beg your pardon," he added, hesitating, "perhaps I ought to ask you to describe the contents."

"Ten notes of one thousand pounds each. I can't tell you the relief of getting them back. Thank you a thousand times! It is much more than my carelessness deserves."

The curate held his tongue: if he had spoken his thoughts, he would have said "Just so!" Perhaps his face expressed something of the kind, for when the bank-notes had been counted over and locked up, Mr. Langley attempted an apologetic sort of explanation.

"You mustn't suppose that I was such a fool as to leave the money in the cab while I went in at Grueby's," he said; "I thought it safer in my hand than in my pocket, and I had just put it on the seat before getting in when the sudden snow-storm attracted my attention,—and"—he hesitated.

"And then you were so kind as to take pity on me," said Mary, and the curate smiled as he murmured some commonplace about virtue not being its own reward.

"And now, Mary, my dear," he said to his daughter, "we had better be setting off homewards; it is getting dusk already, and we must be back for our evening service."

"Oh! no," said the banker, warmly; "do pray take a cup of tea before you go; my sister will be extremely glad to make your acquaintance. And you must really let me send you home in the brougham. I don't generally have it out on Sunday, really," he added, as he read some disapproval of the ready offer in the curate's face; "but this is an exceptional case—you said so yourself, and I do hope you will let me have the pleasure of sending you back in it."

He spoke so very much as if he meant what he said, that Mr. Mackworth gave way, greatly to his daughter's satisfaction, and followed their host across the hall to a long drawing-room, fragrant with the sweet breath of the conservatory on which it opened. Here, as elsewhere, all was fresh and new: and on the walls were pictures which riveted her father in a moment. He had a great natural taste for art, and during a tour he had once made in Italy as tutor to a friend, that taste had been highly cultivated. His remarks showed such thorough knowledge and discrimination that Mr. Langley felt rather out of his depth, and turned to Mary:

"Do you care for pictures?" he asked her.

"I *care*," she answered, "but I am quite ignorant about them. I know what I like, and that is all."

"And that is exactly my case," said Mr. Langley. "I know nothing else about them."

"You must have had excellent taste to begin with," Mr. Mackworth put in, "to select as you have selected. See, Mary," he added, pointing out one of Millais' gorgeous pieces of colouring; "is not this what you once described to me?"

"Oh! yes," cried Mary eagerly, as pleased as if she were greeting an old friend: "it was in the Royal Academy two years ago."

"Do you often go to the Royal Academy?" asked Mr. Langley.

"Whenever I can. Mrs. Halroyd likes her children to go sometimes, and then I take them. I am their governess," she said, in answer to Mr. Langley's inquiring look.

"I treat myself to an hour there, too, whenever I can; it does one good after a dull day's work."

"Oh! doesn't it?" said Mary: "I always think, after a few months in London, that one gets so weary of never seeing anything but what is ugly."

"You don't like London, I see," said Mr. Langley, smiling.

"Who can? I like the people I am with there—I am as happy as possible—but, as to London itself! I do so long for something green to look at: something really green and wild, not all prim and spoilt, like the parks."

"I believe," said her father, amused by her genuine earnestness, "that my daughter would have everybody agree that London is unfit for human habitation. Now I, on the contrary, think London life is one well worth the living."

At this moment, when the curate had given up his study of the pictures on account of the gathering darkness, tea made its appearance. Lamps were brought by one or two soft-treading servants, and a square table seemed to start from the large bow window, covered with shining silver, exquisite china, and the whitest of napery. Mary's perfect enjoyment was a little marred by her almost self-reproachful regret at being there instead of Cilla, and also by a slight degree of shyness which crept over her when the comfortable twilight no longer sheltered her. This feeling was rather increased by the entrance of a small pretty woman dressed in handsome half mourning, whom Mr. Langley introduced as "my sister, Mrs. Lester." He briefly explained to her the affair of the bank-notes, and she turned to Mary with warm thanks and expressions of the greatest relief.

"It is more than you deserve, Vincent," she said, shaking her head at her brother. And then she took her place at the table, and dispensed most welcome cups of tea; and the conversation grew so animated that both Mary and her father were sorry when the brougham was announced. As they rose to go, Mr. Langley came up to the curate rather nervously, and offered him something enclosed in an envelope.

"You must let me pay my debts," he said. Mr. Mackworth looked at him for a moment in bewilderment: then suddenly examined the packet, and tendered it back, shaking his head.

"But I really shall not feel satisfied unless I pay the reward, as I have publicly offered it—for your poor people, Mr. Mackworth," said the banker.

"For his penance, Mr. Mackworth, on moral grounds you ought to take it," interposed Mrs. Lester: "don't you think so?" She turned her agreeable face on Mary, who laughed and hazarded no opinion. To tell the truth, she would have had no objection at all to those five hundred pounds and the comfort they would bring to her mother and Cilla, the advantages to Harry, the addition to every one's well-being. No doubt papa was right, and she was low-minded and ignoble, but still!—so she said nothing, and her father rejoined:

"As to my poor people, if you like to spend the sum in charity, there are plenty of ways of doing so, which I am sure I need not point out to you. I thank you very much for your hospitality, and above all for the sight of those pictures: you don't know the treat it has been to me."

"You must come by daylight: this evening it was too dark to see them well," said Mr. Langley. "Will you not bring him?" he added, as he handed Mary to the carriage.

"We shall be delighted," Mr. Mackworth answered for her; and the brougham drove off.

Of course the home party were in some excitement as to the visit at Nettlehurst; and after service, as all gathered round the fire, Mary was eagerly questioned and cross-questioned. The discovery that her unknown friend was the banker himself caused great amusement to the younger branches, and Mr. Mackworth gave a little sigh of resigned surprise at the folly of youth and womankind, when he found that even his wife seemed more interested in hearing all about Mr. Langley and his sister, than in what he had to say about that beautiful Millais, those exquisite Landseers, and that Madonna after Sassofer Zata, which he really almost thought must be an original.

The questions followed one another thick and fast; but perhaps Mary's answers were not quite so ready as usual: she described the house and grounds with animation, and drew a clever picture of Mrs. Lester, "a small, sharp, pretty little woman, with a face like a good-natured hawk;" but she had so little to say about Mr. Langley that Harry reproached her for ingratitude, and the fire of family wit kindled again, reducing the curate to fall back on one of his often repeated and most utterly disregarded injunctions: "My dears, do try to talk about things; not people."

"I suppose," Cilla suggested, as the evening drew to a close, "there is no chance of our being asked to the Nettlehurst ball."

Mary shook her head. "Though," she said, colouring a little and glancing at her father, "Mr. Langley did say he hoped we would come again."

"He was obliged to say that," Mr. Mackworth observed; "but I certainly shall not take him at his word: by this time to-morrow he will have forgotten our very existence."

"Oh, papa!" Mary looked so much aggrieved by this speech, that her mother glanced at her in surprise, and then said gently: "Darling, I wish you could go to this ball: it would be a great treat for you."

"Oh! I don't mind about that a bit, mamma," said Mary, rallying her spirits. "Come, Harry; you help me to go and get the supper. It is growing quite late."

At that same moment, Mr. Langley, sitting over his dessert with Mrs. Lester, had just said abruptly:

"Kate, I want you to call on the Mackworths and ask them to the ball."

"Call on them, of course I will; but as to the ball, Vincent, I wouldn't if I were you. Depend upon it they have no clothes for such an occasion."

"What does that matter? Surely they could do up a muslin gown or a something or other of some kind," said her brother with masculine vagueness. "Do call, Katie, and take them a card; won't you?"

"My dear! considering that the ball is yours, and I'm only a guest myself, you need not speak so imploringly," said Mrs. Lester, laughing. "Is it necessary to call on them to-morrow?"

"I suppose not."

There was a silence; then Mr. Langley got up and walked to the fire-place.

"I say, Kate, I wish you would though, if you don't mind."

"Wish I would do what? Oh! are you thinking about the Mackworths still? Of course, dear, I'll do exactly what you wish about it, and about asking them too."

"And, Kate. Don't ask them so that they feel bound to say no."

"You are wonderfully interested about these people, Vincent," she said, looking up at him.

"Well—isn't he an interesting man? And I have heard so much of the good he does at Farley. It would fare ill enough without him, for old Lowther scarcely ever goes near the place."

"Mr. Lowther is dying, is he not?"

"He is by way of being ill, but he has cried wolf so often, that he is sure to live for ever. People of that sort always do."

"I will call to-morrow," said Mrs. Lester, rising; "and, as to the ball, though I dare say they won't come, people like to be asked. However, to tell you the truth, we have quite girls enough already."

The Mackworths were spoken of no more that evening, but Mrs. Lester thought that she had never known her brother so silent and pre-occupied.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read on Tuesday, March 30, at St. James's Hall, London; Wednesday, March 31, Sheffield; Thursday, April 1, and Friday, April 2, Birmingham; Monday, April 5, Tuesday, April 6, Thursday, April 8, and Friday, April 9, Liverpool; Tuesdays, April 13, 27, May 11, and 25, St. James's Hall, London.

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A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VIII. DURING THE INTERVAL.

SATURDAY morning, the day after that on which Joyce had sent off the eventful letter to Marian. Twelve o'clock, and no appearance as yet of Lady Caroline Mansergh, who had sent word that she had a slight headache, and would take her breakfast in her room. Lady Hetherington hated people having breakfast in their rooms; it did not, of course, inconvenience her in the least; she herself was never particularly lively in the morning, and spoke very little, and disliked being spoken to; so that it was not the loss of companionship that she regretted; it was merely what people called a "fad" of hers, that the household generally should assemble at the breakfast-table, and she was annoyed when anything occurred to prevent it.

Her ladyship was generally out of temper that morning, several things having conspired to disturb her equanimity. They were about to move the establishment to London; which was always a sore trial for her at the best of times; but now that they were going up before Easter, it was specially hard to bear. She had told Lord Hetherington, as she pathetically narrated both orally and by letter to all her friends, that it was useless their going to Hetherington House at that time of the year, when they would find no one in town but members' wives who have come up for the session, and the wretched people who live there all their lives; there wouldn't be a soul they knew, and the draughts at Hetherington House were perfectly awful; and yet Lord Hetherington would go; she could not imagine what had come to him. The last morning's post had brought her a letter from her milliner, asking for money; and even the greatest ladies sometimes not merely dislike being asked for money, but have difficulty in finding it; and the countess's stock of ready cash happened to be very low at that moment. And the new housekeeper who had come from Lady Rundell Glasse's, and who was so highly recommended, had turned out a complete failure, and must be got rid of before they go to town; and old Mrs. Mason, the town housekeeper, must be telegraphed to to look out for some one else; and, altogether, her ladyship was thoroughly upset, and, wanting some one to vent her ill-humour on, and having lost her judgment as well as her temper, thought she would find that some one in Lady Caroline. So, when twelve o'clock arrived, and her sister-in-law had not put in an appearance, the countess went to her room, entered upon her knock, and found Lady Caroline buried in a huge chair in front of the fire, reading a book, while her maid was combing her hair. There was scarcely anything which Lady Caroline liked better than having her hair combed—not dressed, that she hated—but quietly combed and brushed alternately. She almost purred under the sensation, like a cat whose fur is smoothed the right way; it was pleasant, it was refreshing, it soothed her, and put her on good terms with the world; so that when she looked up and saw Lady Hetherington to whom she was not very partial, she received her with a smile, and expressed her delight at the visit.

"It is really immensely good of you to come and see me, Margaret, especially when I know you're not fond of taking trouble in a general way," she said, putting

her book on to her lap and looking up languidly.

"They told me you were ill, or I don't know that I should have come," retorted Lady Hetherington, with some asperity.

"Ah, that was quite right of them; I told them to say that. You can go, Phillips"—to the maid—"I'll ring when I want you. I don't suppose there's any harm in sending mendacious messages by the servants, do you? It would be far more demoralising to them if one were to tell the truth and say one was lazy, and that kind of thing, because it would provoke their contempt instead of their pity, and fill them with horrible revolutionary ideas that there was no reason why they shouldn't be lazy as well as we, and all sorts of dreadful things."

"If I had thought it was mere laziness that kept you to your room this morning, Caroline, I think my 'dislike of taking trouble in a general way' would have influenced me in this particular instance, and saved you the bore of my interrupting you."

"That's where you're so ungenerous, Margaret! Not the smallest bore in the world; the stupidity of this book, and Phillips's action with the hair-brush, combined, were sending me off to sleep, and you interfered at an opportune moment to rescue me. How is West, this morning?"

"Very much as he was last night. Intent on distinguishing himself on this—what do you call it? irrigation scheme."

"Oh dear, still harping on those channels and pipes and all the rest of it! Poor Mr. Joyce, there is plenty of work in store for him, poor fellow!"

"Dreadful, will it not be? for that charming young man to be compelled to work, to earn his wages!" said Lady Hetherington, with a sneer.

Lady Caroline looked up, half-astonished, half-defiant. "Salary, not wages, Margaret!" she said, after a moment's pause.

"Salary, then!" said her ladyship, shortly; "it's all the same thing!"

"No, dear, it isn't! Salary isn't wages; just as the pin-money which West allows you isn't hire! You see the difference, dear?"

"I see that you're making a perfect fool of yourself, with regard to this man!" exclaimed Lady Hetherington, thoroughly roused.

"What man?" asked Lady Caroline, in all apparent simplicity.

"What man? Why this Mr. Joyce! And I think, Caroline, that if you choose to forget your own position, you ought to think of us, and have some little regard for decency, at all events so long as you're staying in our house!"

"All right, dear!" said Lady Caroline, with perfect coolness. "I'm sorry that my conduct gives you offence, but the remedy is easy: I'll tell West how you feel about it at luncheon, and I'll leave your house before dinner!"

A home thrust, as Lady Caroline well knew. The only time that Lord Hetherington during his life had managed to pluck up a spirit, was on the occasion of some real or fancied slight offered by his wife to his sister. Tail-lashings and roarings, and a display of fangs are expected from the tiger, if, as the poet finely puts it, "it is his nature to." But when the mild and inoffensive sheep paws the ground and makes ready for an onslaught with his head, it is the more terrible because it is so unexpected. Lord Hetherington's assertion of his dignity and his rights on the one occasion in question was so tremendous that her ladyship never forgot it, and she was extremely unwilling to go through such another scene. So her manner was considerably modified, and her voice considerably lowered in tone, as she said:

"No, but really, Caroline, you provoke me in saying things which you know I don't mean! You are so thoughtless and headstrong——"

"I never was cooler or calmer in my life! You complain of my conduct in your house! It would be utterly beneath me to defend that conduct, it requires no defence, so I take the only alternative left, and quit your house!"

"No; but Caroline, can't you see——"

"I can see this, Lady Hetherington, and I shall mention it once for all! You have never treated that gentleman, Mr. Joyce, as he ought to be treated. He is a gentleman in mind, and thought, and education; and he comes here, and does for poor dear stupid West what West is totally unable to do himself, and yet is most anxious to have the credit of. The position which Mr. Joyce holds is a most delicate one, one which he fills most delicately, but one which any man with a less acute sense of honour and right might use to his own advantage, and to bring ridicule on his employer. Don't fancy I'm hard on dear old West in saying this; if he's your husband, he's my brother, and you can't be more

jealous of his name than I am! But it's best to be plainspoken about the matter now, it may save some serious difficulties hereafter. And how do you treat this gentleman? Until I spoke to you some months since, you ignored his presence; although he was domesticated in your house, you scarcely knew his personal appearance. Since then you bow and give him an occasional word, but you're not half so polite to him as you are to the quadrille-bandsman when he is in much request, or to the Bond-street librarian when stalls for some particular performance are scarce. I am different; I am sick to death of 'us' and 'our set,' and our insipid fade ways, and our frightful conventionality and awful dulness! Our men are even more odious than our women, and that's saying a good deal; their conversation varies between insolence and inanity, and as they dare not talk the first to me, they're compelled to fall back on the second. When I meet this gentleman, I find him perfectly well-bred, perfectly at his ease, with a modest assurance which is totally different from the billiard-table swagger of the men of the day; perfectly respectful, full of talk on interesting topics, never for an instant pressing himself unduly forward, or forgetting that he is, what he is, a gentleman! I find a charm in his society; I acknowledge it; I have never sought to disguise it! The fact that he saved my life, at the hazard of his own, does not tend to depreciate him in my eyes! And then, because I like him and have the honesty to say so, I am bid to 'think of' my relations, and 'have regard for decency!' A little too much, upon my word!"

People used to admire Lady Caroline's flashing eyes, but her sister-in-law had never seen them flash so brilliantly before, nor had her voice, even when singing its best, ever rung so keenly clear. For once in her life, Lady Hetherington was completely put down and extinguished; she muttered something about "not having meant anything," as she made her way to the door, and immediately afterwards she disappeared.

"That woman is quite too rude!" said Lady Caroline to herself, ringing the bell as soon as the door closed behind her sister-in-law. "If she thinks to try her tempers on me, she will find herself horribly mistaken. One sufferer is quite enough in a family, and poor West must have the entire monopoly of my lady's airs! Now, Phillips, please to go on brushing my hair!"

Meantime, the cause of all this commotion and outbreak between these two ladies, Walter Joyce, utterly unconscious of the excitement he was creating, was pursuing the even tenor of his way as calmly as the novel circumstances of his position would admit. Of course, with the chance of an entire change in his life hanging over him—a change involving marriage, residence in a foreign country, and an occupation which was almost entirely strange to him—it was not possible for him to apply his mind unreservedly to the work before him. Marian's face would keep floating before him instead of the lovely countenance of Eleanor de Sackville, erst maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth, who had this in common with Marmion's friend, Lady Heron, that fame "whispered light tales" of her. Instead of Westhope, as it was in the old days, with its fosse, drawbridge, portcullis, ramparts, and all the mediævalisms which it was in duty bound to have, Walter's fancy was endeavouring to realise to itself the modern city of Berlin, on the river Spree, while his brain was busied in conjecturing the nature of his forthcoming duties, and in wondering whether he possessed the requisite ability for executing them. Yes! he could get through them, and not merely that, but do them well, do anything well, with Marian by his side. Brightened in every possible way by the prospect before him, better even in health and certainly in spirits, he looked back with wonder on his past few months' career; he could not understand how he had been so calm, so unexpectant, so unimpassioned. He could not understand how the only real hopes and fears of his life, those with which Marian was connected, had fallen into a kind of quiescent state, which he had borne with and accepted. He could not understand that now, when the hopes had been aroused and sent springing within him, and the fears had been banished, at least for a while. For a while! for ever! the mere existence of any fear was an injustice to Marian! She had been true, and steadfast, and good, and loving. She had proved it nobly enough. The one weakness which formed part of her character, an inability to contend with poverty—a venial failing enough, Walter Joyce thought, especially in a girl who must have known, more particularly in one notable instance, the sad results of want of means—would never now be tried. There would be no need for her to struggle, no necessity for pinching and screwing. Accustomed since his childhood to live on the poorest pittance, Joyce looked at the salary now offered to him as real

wealth, position-giving, and commanding all comforts, if not luxuries. The thought of this, and the knowledge that she would be able to take her mother with her to share her new home, would give Marian the greatest pleasure. He pictured her in that new home, bright, sunny, and cheerful; the look of care and anxiety, the two deep brow-lines which her face had worn during the last year of their residence at Helmingham, quite obliterated; the old, cheerful, ringing tone restored to her voice, and the earnest, steadfast, loving gaze in her quiet eyes, and the thought almost unmanned him. He pulled out his watch-chain, took from it the locket containing Marian's portrait (but a very poor specimen of photography, taken by an "arteeste" who had visited Helmingham in a green van on wheels, and who both orally and in his printed bills laid immense stress on the fact that not merely the portrait, but a frame and hook to hang it up by, were in certain cases "given in"), and kissed it tenderly. "In a very little time now, my darling!" he murmured—"in a very little time we shall be happy."

Pondering on his coming meeting with Marian actively suggested the thought of the severance of existing ties, and the parting with the people with whom he was then domesticated. He had been very happy, he thought, all things considered. He was in a bright pleasant mood, and thus indisposed to think harshly of anything, even of Lady Hetherington's occasional fits of temper or insolence. Certainly Lady Hetherington had always treated him with perfect courtesy, and since the great day of the ice-accident had evinced towards him a marked partiality. As for Lady Caroline—he did not know why his cheek should flush as he thought of her, he felt it flush, but he did not know why—as for Lady Caroline, she had been a true friend, nothing could exceed the kindness which she had shown him from the day of his arrival among the family, and he should always think of her with interest and regard. It was clearly his duty to tell Lord Hetherington of the offer he had received, and of the chance of his leaving his secretaryship. Or, as Lord Hetherington was scarcely a man of business, and as Lady Hetherington cared but little about such matters and might not be pleased at having them thrust under her notice, it would be better to mention it to Lady Caroline. She would be most interested, and, he thought, with the flush again rising in his face, most annoyed at the news; though he felt sure that it was plainly a rise in life for him, and his proper course to pursue, and would eventually give her pleasure. He would not wait for the receipt of Marian's reply, there was no need for that, his bounding heart told him, but he would take the first opportunity that offered of telling Lady Caroline how matters stood, and asking her advice as to how he should mention the fact to her brother. That opportunity came speedily; as Joyce was sitting in the library, his desk an island in a sea of deeds and papers and pedigrees, memorials of bygone Wests, his pen idly resting in his hand, his eyes looking steadfastly at nothing, and his brains busy with the future, the door opened, and Lady Caroline entered. Joyce looked up and for the third time within an hour the flush mounted to his face.

"I'm very sorry to disturb you, Mr. Joyce," said her ladyship, "but I have two or three notes for to-night's post, and the house is so upset with this coming departure for London, that there's not a quiet place where one can write a line but here. I'll sit down at West's writing-table, and be as mute as a mouse."

"There's no occasion for silence, Lady Caroline," replied Joyce. "I am not specially busy just now, and indeed I was going to ask the favour of a little conversation with you."

"Conversation with me?" And Lady Caroline's voice, unconsciously, perhaps, became a little harder, her manner a little less familiar as she spoke.

"With you, if you please. I have some news to tell, and some advice to ask."

"I'm sure I shall be delighted to hear the first and to give the second—that is, if advice from me would be of any use to you, which I very much doubt." Neither voice nor manner were in the least relaxed, and Lady Caroline's face was very pale and rather hard and stern. "However," she added, after a moment's pause, finding he did not speak, and in a different tone, "under present circumstances I ought to feel very little compunction in disturbing you, for you go to town on Wednesday, and you know you prophesied for yourself the strictest seclusion when once you arrived at Hetherington House."

"That is the very matter on which I wanted to speak to you, Lady Caroline!"

"Indeed!" said Lady Caroline, with a rather disappointed air.

"I don't suppose that I shall ever set foot inside Hetherington House."

"Why, you don't mean to say you have gone back to that originally preposterous notion of remaining here after we have all gone? Do you remember the man who was going to play Othello and blacked himself all over, Mr. Joyce? There is such a thing as overdoing one's devotion to one's duty; or rather, what one imagines one's duty."

"No, I certainly do not intend to remain at Westhope."

"You are pleased to speak in enigmas, to-day, Mr. Joyce; and as I am horridly stupid at such things, and never guessed one of them in my life, I must be content to wait until you are further pleased to explain." There was an impertinence about her ladyship sometimes in look and tone which became her immensely, and was extraordinarily provoking.

"Seriously, then, Lady Caroline, I am thinking of leaving my present occupation——"

"Of leaving us—I mean Lord Hetherington?" interrupted Lady Caroline.

"Yes. Not that I am not, as I ought to be, thoroughly grateful to his lordship and to everybody of his family for their kindness and consideration to me, but the fact is that I have received an offer of employment which, perhaps, will suit me better, and——"

"You would be very foolish not to avail yourself of it, then, Mr. Joyce," again interrupted Lady Caroline, the chilling tone coming back to her voice and the stern look to her face.

"Will you kindly hear me out?" said Joyce. "I am not exaggerating when I say that I am so grateful for all the kindness which I have received in this house, that nothing would tempt me to leave it that did not give me the chance of being enabled to gratify the one wish of my life. The offer which has been made to me will, I think, do this. You have been good enough, Lady Caroline, to admit me to sufficient intimacy to talk of my private affairs, and when I mention the one wish of my life, you will know that I mean my marriage with Miss Ashurst."

"Certainly," said Lady Caroline, full of attention; "and the proposition which is under your consideration—or, rather, which I suppose you have accepted—will enable you to carry out this plan?"

"It will. There shall be no disguise with you. I am offered the post of Berlin correspondent to a London newspaper. The salary would not be considered large by you, or any one of your——You know what I mean," he said, in answer to an impatient movement of her head. "But it is sufficient to enable me to offer Marian the comforts which she ought to have, and to receive her mother to live with us."

"That will be very nice—very nice indeed," said Lady Caroline, reflectively. "I'm sure I congratulate you very heartily, Mr. Joyce—very heartily. I think you said, when that man—what's his name?—Lord Hetherington's agent—said something about a boy whom you knew being killed—I think you said you had not heard from Miss Ashurst for some time?"

"Yes; I did say so."

"Have you heard since?"

"No, I have not. But I can perfectly understand her silence, and you would, if you knew her. Marian is one of those persons who, on occasions like this—of illness and death, I mean—are the mainstay of the place wherever they may happen to be, and have to take the whole burden of management on to their own shoulders."

"Of course—certainly—no doubt," said Lady Caroline. "And she has not written since the boy's death?"

"No, not since."

"It must have been a sad blow for the old father to bear. I don't know why I call him old, though. What age is he?"

"Mr. Creswell? About fifty-five, I should think."

"Ah, poor man! poor man!" said Lady Caroline, with much greater expression of pity for Mr. Creswell than when she first heard of Tom's death. "You have written to Miss Ashurst, informing her of this proposition, you say, Mr. Joyce?"

"Yes, I wrote directly the offer assumed a tangible form."

"And as yet you have not had her reply?"

"No; there has not been time. I only wrote yesterday; she will not get the letter until to-morrow."

"True, a two days' post from here to—where she is staying. Then you will look for her answer on Wednesday. Are you entirely depending on Miss Ashurst's reply?"

"I scarcely understand you, Lady Caroline?"

"I mean you are waiting until you hear from Miss Ashurst before you send your acceptance of this offer? Exactly so! But—suppose Miss Ashurst thought it unadvisable for her to leave this place where she is staying just now——"

"That is an impossible supposition."

"Well then, put it that her mother's health—which you told me was ailing—was such as to prevent her from undertaking so long and serious a journey, and that she thought it her duty to remain by her mother——"

"'Forsaking all other, and cleaving only unto him,'" quoted Joyce, with gravity.

"Yes, yes, my dear Mr. Joyce, very proper; but not the way of the world now-a-days; besides, I'm sure you would not be selfish enough to have the old lady left behind amongst strangers. However, grant it hypothetically—would you still take up this appointment?"

"I cannot possibly say," replied Joyce, after a moment's pause. "The idea is quite new to me. I have never given it consideration."

"I think I should, under any circumstances, if I were you," said Lady Caroline, earnestly, and looking hard at him. "You have talent, energy, and patience, the three great requisites for success, and you are, or I am very much mistaken, intended for a life of action. I do not advise you to continue in the course now opening to you. Even if you start for it, it should be made but a stepping-stone to a higher and a nobler career."

"And that is——?"

"Politics! Plunged in them you forget all smaller things, forget the petty disappointments and discouragements which we all have equally to contend with, whatever may be our lot in life, and wonder that such trivial matters ever caused you annoyance! Wedded to them, you want no other tie; ambition takes the place of love, is a thousand times more absorbing, and in most cases offers a far more satisfactory reward. You seem to me eminently suited for such a career, and if you were to take my advice, you will seek an opportunity for embracing it."

"You would not have me throw away the substance for the shadow? You forget that the chance of my life is now before me!"

"I am by no means so certain that it is the chance of your life, Mr. Joyce! I am by no means certain that it is for the best that this offer has been made to you, or that the result will prove as you imagine. But, in any case, you should think seriously of entering on a political career. Your constant cry has been on a matter on which we have always quarrelled, and a reference to which on your part very nearly sent me off just now, you will harp upon the difference of social position; now distinction in politics levels all ranks. The two leaders of political parties in the present day, who really have pas and precedence over the highest in the land, who are the dispensers of patronage, and the cynosures of the world, are men sprung from the people. There is no height to which the successful politician may not attain."

"Perhaps not," said Joyce. "But I confess I am entirely devoid of ambition!"

"You think so now, but you will think differently some day, perhaps. It is a wonderfully useful substitute."

"Would you advise me to speak to Lord Hetherington about my intentions?"

"I think not, just yet, seeing that you scarcely know what your intentions are. I think I would wait until after Wednesday. Good-bye, Mr. Joyce; I have gossiped away all my spare time, and my letters must wait till to-morrow. You will not fail to let me know when you receive your reply. I shall be most anxious to know."

"This country beauty is playing fast and loose with him," said Lady Caroline to herself, as the door closed behind her. "She is angling for a bigger fish, and he is so innocent, or so much in love—the same thing—as not to perceive it. Poor fellow! it will be an awful blow for him, but it will come, I feel certain."

INJURED INNOCENTS.

Is it a cry, or a fact, that there is a large class of our population subsisting exclusively by dishonest means? Does the professed thief exist only in the diseased imagination of the police? Are the records of the Old Bailey and the Middlesex Sessions, of Millbank and Scotland Yard, ingenious fictions, or stern fact? It is well, in matters of this kind, that the truth should be held constantly and steadily before the public eye.

If Lord Kimberley's bill be objected to as going too far, or not far enough, well and good; but it is well that the public mind should be firmly impressed with the knowledge that the habitual criminal is an actual living fact, and is not to be asserted or explained away by any amount of statement, or by any process of unreason whatever. How he is to be dealt with, is another matter. That it is monstrous to endure the existence of a class of professional thieves, and to allow them to prey on society, unmolested, so long as they have the wit to avoid detection, is obvious. It would seem to be equally clear that in legislating to put a stop to this state of things, the feelings or wishes of the criminals themselves are about the last things we have to consider. Either the professed thief must work and live honestly, or, in

the interest of that part of the community that does work and live honestly, he must be locked up. It is difficult to say which of these alternatives is the more disagreeable to him: that both should be disagreeable to him is no fault of ours. And this object is aimed at by the present system as well as by Lord Kimberley's bill, though by a rather different road. Practically we say to the criminal now: "your sentence has expired, and we have for the present nothing more to do with you; if you be detected in the commission of crime you will be punished again, and more severely than for your first offence; but until you are detected you may do as you like." According to the new Act, a twice convicted felon is to be subject to the supervision of the police for seven years, and is bound, if required, to show that he is getting an honest living. So far, it is difficult to see what there is to object to, in the proposed alteration of the law. It is said, indeed, that a frightful power is thrown into the hands of the police. Think, it is urged, of the black mail that will be levied by corrupt constables. Imagine the condition of the poor wretch who cannot, or will not, satisfy the demands of his persecutors. He will be taken before the magistrate and, whatever the result, must inevitably be ruined. Convicted, he goes to prison for twelve months. Acquitted, his master dismisses him and he must starve, or steal, and take the consequences. Probably no system of human justice will ever be framed under which all injustice and hardship will be impossible, but this seems one of the veriest turnip-headed bogies ever fashioned. The mere fact of a man's being in honest employment of any sort would be sufficient proof of the bad faith or imbecility of any constable who arrested him; and, except upon the wild supposition that the magistrates and Commissioners of Police entirely pervert their duty, it is pretty clear that the ruin of the constable would be at least as much a matter of certainty as that of the convict. To say nothing of Colonel Henderson's shrewd remark, that the police are always heartily glad to be quit of troublesome customers. Hence the facility with which they get into the army, without let or hindrance from the police, as most officers who have experience of recruits, well know to their cost.

"How," it is asked, "how about the wretched creatures twice convicted of felony?—how of those thrice convicted? By the provisions of this bill they will pass the remainder of their days on the system of one week out of prison and one year in, until death draws the bolt for the last time." Precisely so; and why not? It is, be it observed, by no means necessary that the interesting victim should pass the remainder of his days in prison. That rests entirely with himself. If he choose to live honestly, he will see as little of the insides of prisons as his workfellows who have never been convicted. If he do not choose so to live, surely he is better under lock and key, where he can do no mischief, than at large, spoiling and wasting the property of the community. And, after all, if we do not keep him in prison he is sure to find his own way there. The difference is, that in the one case he is prevented from doing harm, while in the other the mischief is done before preventive measures are adopted.

It is of little use in the consideration of the proposed measure to say, as has been said, that a more efficient police administration would cure the greater part of the evils of which the public complain. It is idle to say that our detective police is unworthy of the name. It is not necessary to go into these questions at all. It may be the case (we do not say it is) that the efficiency of the force is not what it was; but how that can affect the question of making professional crime as difficult and dangerous a pursuit as it can be made, or what argument can be found in it against a measure eminently preventive and not detective, is more than we can understand. Habitual criminals exist and carry on their trade—it is nothing more or less—for no other reason than because the police have no preventive power whatever over them, unless detected in some offence. It is illogical in the last degree to punish severely detected crime, so long as, undetected, it is thus tacitly encouraged.

Over ticket-of-leave men, or, as they are more correctly termed, licence-holders, the police have at present some slight check. A male licence-holder on his release from prison has to report himself and his address at the principal police station in the district in which he resides, within three days of his liberation. Afterwards he is required to present himself once a month. With this exception he is, unless he break any of the special conditions endorsed on his licence, to all intents and purposes a free man. His employer is not informed by the police that he has a ticket-of-leave man in his service. If he keep his own counsel and behave himself well, nobody need know anything of his antecedents. If he get into trouble, or if the police of the district suspect him to be leading an irregular life, report is made to the chief office, and (after inquiry quietly conducted), such steps are taken as may seem necessary. If under such circumstances the man abscond, as he very frequently does, he is advertised in the Police Gazette, apprehended when discovered, and his licence becomes forfeited. If the licence-holder have a strong objection to reporting himself to the police, he has only to place himself under the care of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, whose officers will look after him, unless his conduct become very bad. In that case the Society give notice to the police, and wash their hands of their man. It would appear that the supervision of the society is greatly preferred to that of the police. Colonel Henderson, in his memorandum of the 5th of March, tells us that of three hundred and sixty-eight male licence-holders discharged into the metropolitan police district in 1868, two hundred and ninety placed themselves under the society, either on discharge or shortly after-

wards. Some confusion naturally arises from this divided government, and it not unfrequently happens that the police discover a so-called "Society's man" in prison for a fresh offence, without having received previous intimation of anything being wrong with him. A not unusual way of shirking both police and society, is to go to sea. It is not necessary to go far; Gravesend, even, has been found a sufficiently distant port. Once on board ship, the society reports to the police that the man has gone to sea. No further attempts at supervision are made, and the convict calmly resumes his life ashore: only taking care to avoid any part of England where he happens to be inconveniently well known. This system is too lax; the new Act proposes greater strictness. A licence-holder will be liable to arrest, and forfeiture of his licence, unless it can be shown that he is earning his bread honestly. It is not easy to see why this should not be so. To liberate a convict before the expiration of his sentence, and practically to turn him loose upon society with no guarantee of his improvement, appears sufficiently absurd. A licence at all is a privilege; it is not too much to insist that it shall be issued only to those who show themselves worthy of it.

In the neighbourhood of Whitehall, in an office that partakes a little of the ordinary counting-house, and a good deal of the barrack orderly-room, is to be found ample evidence of the existence of a class of professed criminals. Here, in vast numbers, methodically and neatly arranged, are kept the papers of the licence-holders who have been discharged into the metropolitan district. When a man is liberated from prison, a kind of passport is sent to the Chief Police Office, describing his appearance, age, and so on, and giving all particulars as to his crime, sentence, and licence. To this criminal biography is attached the photograph of its hero or heroine; in fact, the register office of licence-holders is a national portrait gallery of criminals on the largest scale. A collection of faces of the most ordinary street type. The lower neighbourhoods about Drury Lane will show hundreds of faces that might take their places here with the greatest propriety. The slums of Westminster and Whitechapel might be, and to a great extent indeed are, peopled by the brothers and sisters of these heavy, brutish, scowling human animals. Let us, under the auspices of the courteous Superintendent, and assisted by his aide-de-camp, the quick and ready sergeant, turn over the histories of a few of these promising subjects, and, solely from the facts recorded here, form our own opinions as to the nature and habits of that injured innocent, the professed criminal.

Here is a young fellow who was convicted in September, 1862, of house-breaking, and sentenced to six years penal servitude. Not only was his character so bad in prison that he was not judged worthy of a licence, and so had to serve his full time; but owing, as it appears, to certain breaches of prison discipline, he was not liberated until some days after his sentence actually expired. At the end of October, 1868, this gentleman was restored to his friends, and, no doubt, immediately resumed the active exercise of his profession. Certain it is that he was "wanted" only four months after his release, and early in March was sentenced to twelve months, for robbery. It is satisfactory to add that this sentence was accompanied by hard labour. On all fours with this case, is that of a horse-stealer who had a sentence of six years, and who, after serving four and a half, obtained a licence, and was liberated in October last. The Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, whom he honoured with his patronage, found him a troublesome customer, for we find them very soon giving notice to the police, that his mode of living was considered doubtful, and that they think it better that he should make his reports to the police. He made his report once, but before the next was due, his career was summarily cut short. With two comrades—also, it is scarcely necessary to say, convicts—he was in February apprehended for burglary, and the judge not having much sympathy with regular members of the profession, sentenced them to fourteen years. Our sergeant has no particular remark to make touching this case, which appears to be in no way of an extraordinary nature, except that it is curious that the man should have given up horse-stealing and taken to burglary. "You see, sir, they usually stick to one school," he says, reflectively. Of the truth of this remark we presently find abundant evidence. Here are the papers of one Scott, sentenced in May, 'sixty-four, to four years for stealing what are technically known as "fixtures." In December, 'sixty-seven, Scott, then nineteen years of age, was liberated on licence; and fourteen months afterwards (having meanwhile absconded, and successfully concealed his whereabout), was discovered at the Surrey Sessions under an alias, on his trial for stealing lead from the roof of a house—lead being a "fixture." A sentence of ten years was the result of this second raid on house fittings. In like manner a lady, named Toole, appears to have been utterly unable to resist the attractions of handsome articles of dress, inasmuch as after undergoing part of a sentence of six years for stealing silk mantles, she repeated the offence while a licencee and was sentenced to ten years.

Here, we find a victim sentenced to eighteen months, with hard labour, for larceny, within two months of his release on licence; there, another who incurs a penalty of ten years' penal servitude, four months after he comes out. Here are two culprits even more expeditious or less lucky. John Flinn received his licence on the 6th of May. On the 27th—three weeks afterwards—he was apprehended for burglary, and, in due course of law, sentenced to five years. This feat is even surpassed by John Williams, who, only eight days after his liberation, stole a watch and scent-bottle from a shop window, and, ten days afterwards, was sentenced to go back to the prison he had

only just quitted, for a further term of five years.

One Shepherd was sentenced, in July, 'sixty-four, to four years, and was liberated in December, 'sixty-seven. He reported himself to the Aid Society until nearly the expiration of his time, and six months afterwards was brought before the magistrates — giving an alias — charged with robbing a gentleman of his watch and chain in Newington-causeway. He admitted his guilt, which, as he was taken absolutely in the fact, was a piece of superfluous candour, and, his identity being established, he was got out of the way of society for ten years. This was an artful customer, for when, in the struggle ensuing on the robbery, he found he could not get away, and could not dispose of the watch in any other manner, he managed dexterously to put it into one of the prosecutor's pockets! There is even less room for doubt in the matter of a cunning-looking German, who was liberated in March, 'sixty-eight, on licence, after a sentence of six years. This man reported himself as about to proceed to Berlin, but thought better of it, and remained in London. Here, he had a tolerably prosperous season of six months, which he employed in the same line of business that had before got him into trouble. This was the robbing of furnished lodgings: an operation of great simplicity, and decidedly remunerative. He was "wanted" for some time previous to his apprehension, but succeeded in keeping out of the way until last September, when he was taken. At that time he was travelling under the romantic name of Oakley Brinsley, and, with that alias added to his various others, he now appears as sentenced to fourteen years. Five different prosecutors, each of whom had lost property to the value of upwards of twenty pounds, gave evidence against him. Under the new Act this money would probably not have been lost. Since his imprisonment, the sergeant remarks, this class of robbery has become very much less frequent. There is no doubt that this German innocent was a professor of distinguished eminence.

Equally eminent, although in another line of business, is Mr. Thomas Smith. This suffering innocent was discharged on licence, after serving five years out of a sentence of six, and placed himself under the Aid Society. He reported himself in November, and in January he was apprehended, in company with a friend named Kennedy; both being at the time in possession of much incongruous property, of which they were entirely unable to give any coherent account. Investigation clearly showed this property to be the proceeds of a number of recent portico larcenies: a favourite form of robbery, which consists in climbing, at a time when the occupants of the house are not likely to be in the bedroom, to the first floor by means of the portico, quietly opening a window, laying hands on all the property available, and retiring by the same road. The companions were committed for trial; Kennedy pleaded guilty, and declared that Smith was innocent of any participation in the robberies; the jury, believing him, acquitted Smith, and Kennedy was sentenced to ten years. Now, mark the antecedents of the innocent Smith. Before the magistrate, a strong light was thrown on Smith's previous history by the production of the following list of convictions: 'fifty-four, six weeks; 'fifty-five, eighteen months; 'fifty-seven, three months; 'fifty-eight, two months; 'fifty-eight (this was a bad year for Smith), four years; 'sixty-two, six months, and, in the same year, another six months; 'sixty-three, three months, and, immediately after the expiration of that sentence, six years. Mr. Tyrwhitt remarked, when this list was put in, that he could not understand how such a man was at large at all. We share Mr. Tyrwhitt's dulness of understanding. It is to be hoped that it will not be possible for such a man to be at large much longer.

As a companion picture to this, take the history of Louisa Lyons. Her convictions begin with eight months in 'fifty; in 'fifty-one she had a month and six weeks; in 'fifty-two, one month and twelve months; 'fifty-three, six months; 'fifty-four, two months and four years' penal servitude; 'fifty-eight, two months; 'sixty, six years; 'sixty-six, twelve months for uttering counterfeit coin; finally, in January of this year, ten years for the same offence. This list has a rather professional aspect. It does not appear as if the prospect of one week out, and one year in, would have many new terrors for Smith and Lyons.

Whole families are to be found engaged in particular branches of crime. Here is one. A man who gave the name of Hill was convicted of a robbery on the river, and sentenced to six years, of which he served all but some four months. While a licencee, he was apprehended, under suspicious circumstances in connexion with certain stolen rope, but was discharged. Immediately after his sentence expired, he was taken, with a man giving the name of Thetford, for stealing lead from the roof of a house on the river-side at Vauxhall. They were sentenced, Hill to twelve, and Thetford, who had violently assaulted his capturer, to fourteen years. It turned out that they were brothers, and members of a family which the sergeant describes as being "about the worst family we've got, sir." A father and four sons, all river thieves, and all experienced at penal servitude, make up this charming family circle. They are rarely all out of prison together—indeed, they are all occasionally in prison at once.

In December, 'sixty-eight, an inspector detected three men attempting to open house doors with skeleton keys. After a desperate struggle they were taken, and proved to be three notorious thieves, all of whom had had various terms of penal servitude, and one of whom had only been out of prison six weeks.

We might fill page after page with similar cases. What terms are to be held with people of this kind? They and their like are perfectly well known to the police. They are professed

criminals, habitual criminals; they have no idea whatever of honest industry, but scorn and contempt of it. Allowed to go on stealing, they will steal until they are discovered. Then they will be locked up, and when they receive their licences, or their sentences expire, they will go through exactly the same course again. These are the wretched creatures twice and thrice convicted, in whose behalf our kindliness and our pity are invoked. These are the injured innocents on whose behalf heart-rending appeals are made to our merciful consideration. Why, in the name of all that is absurdly conventional, should we wait to lock up Thomas Smith and Louisa Lyons until we absolutely detect them in the commission of new crime? Why should we not keep them from fresh mischief if they cannot show us that they have really become reputable members of society? It is one thing to smooth the path back to the world for the convict whose crime may have been the result of sudden temptation, and an exceptional act in his life. It is a very different thing to allow a morbid sentimentality to come in the way of the suppression of scoundrels who make robbery a trade, and criminality an occupation.

It is said that "a convicted person under these arrangements would be mere vermin all his life, with every man's hand against him, and his hand against every man." Whereas the Act, it must be remembered, applies only to a particular class of convicted persons; two convictions at least are necessary to bring any criminal within its provisions. Even then the constable has no power himself; he can only take the suspected person before the proper authorities, by whom proper evidence will be required before the penal clauses of the Act can be put in force. As matters now stand, the professed criminal's hand is undoubtedly against every man, but it unfortunately happens that every man's hand is not against him. Lord Kimberley proposes to put the two sides on an equality.

There is but one other objection urged against the bill, and that is one which is a very old rusty weapon against any measure involving an increase of police responsibility and supervision. The odious foreign spy system! Think of the professional spies that will be let loose on the country! Consider the invasion of our private lives—the private lives of such of us as are not felons — which will be the natural and inevitable consequence of setting the police to work to watch a few felons! Now, the professional spies — an ill-natured euphemism for police constables—who will be let loose on the country, will have nothing whatever to do with the private lives of any of us who are not felons; and more, they will even have nothing to do with the private lives of such of us as *are* felons, if we have only been once convicted. No one will suffer but the habitual professional criminal, and that he should suffer until he learns that his profession is on the whole a decidedly wearing and uncomfortable one, is a most desirable thing. As to his claim to be at large between his crimes, after he has become a professional criminal, he is the common enemy, and it is forfeit and gone.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

PLYMOUTH TO BODMIN.

THE broad thoroughfare of the sky not being much impeded by traffic westward, the crow makes a straight swift flight of it from Plymouth to Liskeard—"the palace on a hill," as the Celts called it.

This small town, embedded among the rocky downs of Caradon and the Bodmin moors, was the centre of much hard fighting in the civil wars, when the gay Cavaliers of Cornwall met the stony-faced Puritans of Plymouth on Bradoc Downs, between Liskeard and Lostwithiel. Sir Ralph Hopton—"the soldiers' darling," whom Clarendon afterwards described as the only man never spoken ill of in the Prince's council—was in the field, with Sir John Berkley as commissary-general, and Colonel Ashburnham, as major-general of foot. All Cornwall was theirs, from that grim ship-shattering rock the Shark's Fin to the very earthworks of Saltash, on whose terraces the Puritan sentinels paced, looking gloomily westward for the first sword flash of the enemy. The Parliament resolved to stamp this fire out before the western prairie caught. Rapidly, like clouds rolling together for a storm, grim forces gathered from subjugated Dorset, Somerset, and Devon, and moved westward like a rising deluge. Ruthen, the Scotch governor of Plymouth, led the Parliament forces over the Tamar, to charge the king's men, who were sounding their bugles and beating their drums at Bodmin. Sir Ralph, gallant with lace and feather, wishing to show the psalm-singers that Royalist gentlemen could fear God as well as honour the king, had public prayers read by the army chaplains at the head of every squadron. The Puritans from the high ground muttered that "the Cavalier babe-eaters were at mass." Sir Ralph, "winging his foot with horse and dragoons," advanced, full of fight, within musket-shot of the enemy, and, seeing the Puritan cannon had not yet come up from Liskeard, pushed forward two iron minion drakes, very light guns, under cover of small parties of horse. The first two shots striking full among the Puritan pikemen, and coming from they knew not what hidden batteries, to which their tardy guns could not reply, struck a panic into Ruthen's men; they began to fall back, and, seeing that, the Cavaliers bore hotly forward, pikes down, and drove the Roundheads towards Liskeard. The Cornish men, famous at hedge skirmishing, drove out the enemy's musketeers from behind the loose stone walls and hedges, where they had been thrown back in reserve to protect Ruthen's retreat. Soon the fierce and alert attack of the Cornish men broke the Roundhead ranks, their pikes wavered and scattered, their colours drooped, their fire relaxed, and they fled towards Devonshire, leaving twelve hundred and fifty sullen men prisoners, and nearly all their

flags. The tardy Puritan cannon, too slow to climb the ascent, were also taken—four brass guns (two of them twelve-pounders), one iron saker, shot and powder in quantities, besides heaps of pikes, swords, muskets, pistols, and carbines. Ruthen fled to Saltash, whence he was soon driven, with the loss of eighty men and all his colours. After this battle, Hopton rested at Liskeard, established quarters there, and celebrated a solemn thanksgiving. Charles the First also came there twice; once in 1644, and once in 1645. In 1620 Liskeard was represented by Sir Edward Coke, who is always chained to Littleton in legal memories. In 1775 Edward Gibbon, the historian, was returned for Liskeard, and the next year produced the first volume of his great work, the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Two learned men Liskeard boasts of having educated at its grammar school — two learned but two very different men — Dr. Wolcot and Dean Prideaux. Dr. Wolcot, the son of a Devonshire doctor, first apprenticed to a Cornish apothecary, then a clergyman in Jamaica, practised medicine at Truro and Exeter, and became satirist and tormentor of old King George in London. He nobly threw up the pension with which government silenced him, when he found he had to write for the administration he despised. He was buried at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, his coffin, at his special request, being placed touching that of Butler—Hudibras Butler. Prideaux was a Padstow man; his comprehensive work, The Connexion between the Old and New Testament, is not yet entirely obsolete. He was a learned and virtuous man, who would have been made a bishop, but, suffering from chronic illness, resigned the duty which he could not perform, and made his library his home.

The crow has not far to fly from Liskeard to St. Keyne's Well on the road to West Looe. This saint, unappreciated (except through Southey) out of her own parish, was the daughter of Braganus, a Brecknockshire prince, and came to Cornwall, on a pilgrimage to St. Michael's Mount with her nephew St. Cadoc, who followed to persuade her to return. Being thirsty as they got near Liskeard, St. Cadoc stuck his enchanted staff in the earth, and there instantly gushed out a pure limpid spring which still flows in that green lane near St. Keyne's church. The well is walled in, and from the earth over it grow five trees—an oak, a noble elm, and three ash—which were planted about 1742, by one of the Rashleighs. St. Keyne endowed the water of the spring with a miraculous property. Whichever could first drink of it, after marriage, whether husband or wife, became henceforth the master. Southey, partly following Carew's earlier lines, wrote a pleasant ballad on the subject. The closing verse is full of very quiet humour:

> I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was o'er
> And left my good wife in the porch;
> But i'faith she had been wiser than I,
> For she took a bottle to church.

Local historians tell the story differently. There were two sisters, they say, daughters of a Liskeard farmer, who were married, at an interval of several years apart. The first, Jane, a gentle girl, refused her sister's help to outwit her bridegroom, and she and her lover good-naturedly agreed that neither should visit the dangerous well. Mary, the older and more stubborn girl, promised the widower who married her not to run off to the well the moment the last "Amen" was uttered, as he said it would make him appear foolish to the neighbours; but just before the dinner on the wedding day, the bride called the man apart and said, "Dear Robert, now we are *alone* I may drink;" then, pulling out a bottle, she tossed off the magic water.

Close to Liskeard is St. Neot's, and the crow stays a moment to look in at the church window and record another legend of an eccentric Cornish saint. St. Neot was, according to some historians, the uncle of King Alfred, according to others, a poor shepherd, whose first successful miracle was the impounding in a ring of stones, still shown on Gonzion Down, and uncommonly resembling an old fort, a flock of contumacious crows that had made forays upon his wheat field. Following up this first success, St. Neot went to Rome, returned, became a hermit, and eventually getting tired of solitude, founded a monastery, to make other people suffer what he had already suffered himself. In a well near the monastery, his guardian angel placed two fish, which were never to diminish as long as the saint took out only one daily for his frugal dinner. The saint, however, soon fell ill, and growing dainty and tetchy in his appetite, his servant Barius, in his over zeal to tempt his master to eat, one day scooped up both the fish, and nolens volens, boiled one and fried the other. The saint, aghast at the sin of Barius, instantly fell on his knees to appease heaven till the cooked fish could be thrown back into the spring. The servant was forgiven; the moment the fish touched the water it began to sport and leap, and the saint falling to at his permitted meal was instantly restored to health. At another time St. Neot was praying near the well, in which he used daily to chant the whole Psalter with the water up to his chin, when a hunted deer came and cowered by his side for protection; the dogs on their arrival, reproved by the saint, crouched at his feet, and the astonished huntsman on seeing these miracles renounced the world, and hung his bugle horn up in the cloister as a votive offering. On another occasion some wild deer came of their own accord from the forest to replace some oxen which had been stolen from the saint. The thieves, seeing St. Neot ploughing with the deer, were so conscience stricken that they at once returned the cattle. There is also no doubt that St. Neot built this church mysteriously by night, and that magical teams of two deer and one hare drew all the stone used in its building. St. Neot was a little man, and they say that he had two ways of opening the church door—one by throwing up the key into the keyhole, another by bidding the lock descend to him.

A few miles from Liskeard, in another direction, is Menheniot, where Bishop Trelawney was christened. This was one of the seven bishops whom James the Second was unwise enough to commit to the Tower for refusing to sanction the dangerous Act of Indulgence, which, under pretext of tolerating dissenters, was to open the flood-gates of Rome upon our English Protestantism. It was this sturdy Sir Jonathan, who, when the bishops took their petition to Whitehall, and the angry king exclaimed, "I tell you this is a standard of rebellion!" fell on his knees and said:

"Rebellion! for God's sake, sir, do not say so hard a thing of us. A Trelawney can be no rebel. Remember that my family has fought for the crown. Remember how I served your majesty when Monmouth was in the West."

And good Bishop Ken, worthy Izaak Walton's relation, and the writer of our noble Evening Hymn, then said:

"We have two duties to perform, our duty to God, and our duty to your majesty. We honour you, but we fear God."

The king's face grew dark as he replied:

"Have I deserved this?—I who have been such a friend to your church? *I will be obeyed.* You are trumpeters of sedition. What do you do here? Go to your dioceses, and see that I am obeyed."

Then to himself he muttered:

"I will go on. I have been too indulgent Indulgence ruined my father."

So the bigoted fool went on, and went on, and never stopped till he got all the way to St. Germains.

That one heroic act made Trelawney a demi-god for ever in Cornwall. The miners came swarming up from underground, singing the grand defiant ballad still preserved, and so charmingly rewritten by Mr. Hawker of Morwinstow:

And shall Trelawney die?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why.

Sir Jonathan's pastoral staff is still preserved as a valued relic at Pelynt Church near East Looe. It is of gilt wood; lightning fell on it some years since, but it was as impotent as James's anger, and only fused the copper ornaments that adorned it.

North of Liskeard, the crow's black wings fold upon that strong toppling column of granite blocks—the Cheesewring (cheese press)—a rock idol, says old credulous Borlase, who believed anything and everything.

Near the Cheesewring there is a cave at the foot of a hill, dangerously near the ruthless granite quarries, where a strange hermit of the later times took up his abode in 1735 (George the Second) to study and to meditate. "The Mountain Philosopher," as he was called, was one Daniel Gumb, a poor stonecutter of Lezant, who, as a mere boy, manifested a passion for mathematics and astronomy, and being very poor, resolved to reduce his expenses, so that he might work less and study more. Finding a huge sloping slab of granite near the Cheesewring, Gumb dug a cavern underneath it, built up the walls with cement, and scooped out a chimney.

There this true philosopher lived with his wife and children, rent and tax free. He never left the moor even to visit the neighbouring villages. After his death, when the roof of the cavern fell in, his bedroom and a stone carved with a geometric figure were shown to visitors. They too were destroyed. Then the traveller used to be pointed out the rock where Gumb sat to watch his only friends the stars. The quarrymen carted off that too, and now only the name remains. It is strange that a genius so strongly directed should have left no discoveries, and existed only to waste itself in useless reverie. Not far from the Cheesewring and the Hurlers (ball-players turned into stone for hurling on a Sunday), and near St. Cleer's Church, stands that curious fragment of half-lost British history, the Other Half Stone, a Runic cross, to the memory of Dungarth, a son of Caradoc, King of Cornwall, who was drowned A.D. 872. The well of St. Cleer was once, it is said, used as a ducking pool for the cure of mad people; a barbarous custom.

Bodmin (the monk's town) a crow of Cornish ancestry can hardly pass. It is a long street running between hills, once, antiquaries say, the site of a Temple of Apollo, built by a British king, 830 B.C., really, however, the home of St. Guron, a Cornish anchorite, and also of St. Petrock, a great man here, and afterwards of Benedictine, in a monastery built and favoured by King Athelstan.

In 1496, that impudent impostor Perkin Warbeck, who pretended to be one of the princes escaped from the Tower, and called himself "Richard the Fourth," mustered his adherents at Bodmin preparatory to marching on Exeter, and proclaiming war on Henry the Seventh.

In 1550 (Edward the Sixth) Bodmin effervesced again. The Cornish people were discontented with the Protector. Wiltshire was up, Oxford and Gloucestershire were taking down their bows and bills, Norfolk was on fire, Ket the tanner holding his court under Mousehold Oak; Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent were buzzing angrily. The rebels of Bodmin compelled Boyer the frightened mayor to furnish them with supplies. After the crushing defeat near Exeter, Lord Russell sent Sir Anthony Kingston, the king's provost-marshal general, to look up Bodmin and purge it with fire and steel. Sir Anthony hanged the portreeve of St. Ives in the middle of the town. He also put to death Mr. Mayow of St. Columb, upon a charge not capital, nor even proved. Mr. Mayow's wife, hearing that her husband was arrested, prepared to set out to intercede for him, but she stayed so long before the glass, rendering herself irresistible, that before she reached the terrible provost, Mr. Mayow was dangling from a sign post. Boyer, the worthy mayor of Bodmin, was delighted at the arrival of law and order—still more pleased when he received a letter from the great man naming a day on which he

would dine with him in state. There was a great din and clatter of preparation at Master Boyer's, much silver cleaning, and a tapping of many portly casks. A little before dinner, Kingston took his host aside and whispered that one of the townspeople was shortly to be executed, and that a gallows must be got ready: business was business and must be attended to. The mayor gave the word, the carpenters fell to and soon got up the gibbet, strong and serviceable, and close to the mayor's door. The dinner over and several toasts proposed, Sir Anthony put down his glass, and abruptly asked if the gallows was finished. He had previously appeared slightly preoccupied, and had indeed been good humouredly bantered by the mayor. The answer was that it was ready. "I pray you," said the provost, taking the mayor's arm, "bring me to the place, and let us see the dog hang."

"Is it strong enough?" quoth Kingston, critically.

"Yes," said the mayor, pushing the central post without, "doubtless it is."

The provost's halberdiers closed sternly round, as if eager to hear the conversation.

"Well, then, Master Boyer," said the provost, grimly smiling, "get thee up speedily, for it is prepared for you."

"I hope," answered the miserable mayor, trembling, "you mean not as you speak."

"I' faith," said the provost, angrily, "there is no remedy, sirrah, for thou hast been a busy rebel."

So they hung the mayor at his own door.

At Halgaver, or the Goat's Moor, one mile south of Bodmin, there used to be held in every July a sort of carnival, probably as old as the Saxons, whose clumsy fun it resembles. A lord of misrule was always appointed, to try all unpopular persons for slovenly or extravagant dress, bad manners, or gluttony. The offender was arraigned with great solemnity, and with all sorts of pompous and ludicrous travesties of legal repetitions, evasions, and quibbles. The punishment was being thrown into mud, or water, or both. The old Cornish proverbs of "Take him before the Mayor of Halgaver," "Present him in Halgaver court," are still extant, and are often hurled at slovens, boors, and bears.

A COMPACT REVOLUTION.

The information we receive from day to day concerning the progress of affairs in Spain, does not deeply impress us with the notion that the people of the peninsula are great masters in the art of effecting a revolution. Nevertheless if we direct our steps mentally to the western sea-board, and take a retrospective glance at the middle of the seventeenth century, we find one of the most successful, complete, and bloodless revolutions that the history of the world can present. We refer to the movement that placed the present dynasty of Braganza on the Portuguese throne. The names of the persons who figure in this movement, far from being widely celebrated, will scarcely be recognised by any one who has not bestowed some special attention on the annals of a country that is by no means a general object of interest. Still the events fall so naturally into the form of a well-constructed tale, there is so much character in such brief sketches of the agents as have been handed down to us, and the whole record is so thoroughly rounded off and so intelligible in itself, that we can only wonder that the facts have not been eagerly grasped by some historical novelist, and that some ready playwright did not turn the novel into a comedy. The late M. Eugène Scribe was just the man to have effected the latter operation. Nay, he would not have needed the intervention of the novelist. He who could get out of the not very promising story of the Danish Minister Struensee, the admirable comedy Bertrand et Raton, need not have looked for any material not to be found in the pages of his countryman, Vertot, if he had wished to dramatise the accession of John of Braganza.

The preliminary knowledge requisite for the right understanding of the plot of the real comedy played by Duke John, his friends, and his enemies, in the year of grace 1640, is too slight to alarm even minds most sensitive to boredom. Our readers will vouchsafe to understand that in 1139, when Alfonso, the first King of Portugal, was proclaimed, a law of succession was established, of which the following were the provisions:

I. The son of King Alfonso was to succeed in the direct line according to the rule of primogeniture.

II. In default of issue male, the eldest daughter of the deceased king was to wear the crown, *provided she married a Portuguese noble*, who, however, was not to bear the royal title till his consort had given birth to a male child. If the princess took a husband, not answering to the conditions, her claim was to be forfeited.

III. In default of all direct issue, the brother of the deceased king was to occupy the throne, but for life only, the consent of the Bishops and the States being necessary for the succession of his son.—[N.B. The reader need not impress this third provision strongly on his mind; but he will be kind enough not to forget the second.]

Having propounded thus much of constitutional law, we take a flying leap to the renowned King of Portugal, Dom Sebastian, whose life, though he flourished in the sixteenth century, is almost a myth. Indeed we leap over him, for it is not his life, but his death, or rather disappearance, that we require on the present occasion. Well, in 1578, King Sebastian having crossed over to Africa to overthrow Mulay Muloch, Emperor of Morocco, disappeared in the great battle of Alcaçar-quivir, in which he had been thoroughly defeated. We use the expression disappeared advisedly, for Sebastian of Portugal, like Harold of England, is one of those many illustrious monarchs whose death has never been proved, with sufficient certainty to preclude the superstitious belief that they may probably turn up after the lapse of a few centuries or so, to cheer the hearts of their afflicted people. At all events, in 1578, Sebastian, who had inherited the throne from his grandfather, John the Third, was gone, and had left no issue, and to find a legitimate successor it was necessary to descend the family pedigree as far as his great-grandfather, King Manuel, whose only surviving son was Cardinal Henry. So far there was no difficulty; the title of the cardinal was indisputable, and he occupied the throne without opposition; but as he was nearly seventy years of age, people asked what was to happen after his death; and during his short reign, which lasted only sixteen months, several claimants to the succession made their appearance. Of these only two were important: Catherine, Duchess of Braganza, daughter of Edward, a deceased son of Manuel, and Philip the Second, King of Spain, son of Manuel's eldest daughter, the Empress Isabella. There was this defect in Philip's title, that his father, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, although he had been King of Spain, did not seem to be a Portuguese noble, within the meaning of the law of succession. Philip contended that he was, and certainly the question whether the Spaniards and Portuguese are, or are not, one nation, is agitated at the present day. At any rate, the fault in Philip's pedigree was not so serious that it could not be repaired by physical force. An army, under the command of the Duke of Alva, marched into Portugal, where it easily overcame all resistance, and in 1580 Philip was duly proclaimed the legitimate successor of Cardinal Henry, who had died in the same year, and Portugal was annexed to Spain. We may here take occasion to observe that, unfortunately for the English public, the late Mr. Prescott's History of Philip the Second came to its untimely end before that admirable author had reached this important event.

The preliminaries are now over, and the novel or play, whichever you please to call it, begins. The result of Philip's grand operation was a chronic state of discontent, in which Portugal remained for something like sixty years; naturally enough, for she was treated as a conquered country (which indeed she was), the people being loaded with excessive taxes, and the grandees being compelled to remain in obscurity, lest, by being conspicuous, they might incur the suspicion of the Spaniards. No movement, however, against the government seems to have taken place till the reign of Philip the Fourth, when the administration of Olivarez, popularly called the "Count-Duke," rendered the yoke of the foreigner hateful beyond endurance. Besides keeping the native nobility estranged from public affairs, and becoming more oppressive than his predecessors in his burdensome exactions, Olivarez drained the physical resources of the country by employing in foreign wars all the men capable of bearing arms. Especially detestable was a Portuguese named Vasconcellos, who, nominally secretary to the vice-queen of Portugal, Margaret of Savoy, Duchess of Mantua, was really the local ruler: inasmuch as he was the immediate agent of the Count-Duke, whereas the vice-queen was little more than a cipher, her position being analogous to that of her namesake in the Netherlands about a century before. It was the policy of this worthy man to scatter seeds of dissension among the Portuguese, in order to weaken their power; but no petty difference which he could foment for the purpose of untying the fagot was equal in strength to the bond of common hatred which incited all hearts against the Spaniards.

In the middle of their troubles people began to bethink themselves that they had among them a certain John, Duke of Braganza, grandson and direct heir of the Duchess Catherine, who claimed the throne in the time of Cardinal Henry, and who *did* marry a Portuguese noble, viz., the Duke of Braganza, named, like his grandson, John. The young duke had manifestly the advantage of a title to the throne far superior to that of the detested King of Spain, which was derived from Philip the

Second; but he was about the last person that one would pitch on as the chief of a revolution. He was a good-natured, agreeable, affable gentleman, largely endowed with shrewdness, but lazy to the last degree. Whenever he "gave his mind" to anything, he understood it thoroughly; but the gift of his mind was the only donation in which he was a decided niggard. We may be allowed to conjecture that if Mr. Richard Carstone, of Bleak House, had been the best claimant to the throne of Portugal, in the year 1640, he would have come off just as well as the Duke of Braganza. Nevertheless, so peculiar were the circumstances of the situation, that we are justified in believing that Duke John was the right man in the right place. Intrinsic greatness was not required, but somebody upon whom greatness might be conveniently thrust by the force of events, was the article in demand, and such a somebody was Duke John. His late father, Theodosius, had been a fiery child of the south, who possibly taking for his model Hamilcar's education of Hannibal, had endeavoured to inspire him with an early hatred of the Spaniard, and to keep present to his mind the irritating fact that he had been deprived of a crown which rightfully belonged to him. John entered into his father's views, but held his tongue, and bided his time. Had he done otherwise he would probably have stepped into trouble, and never have worn the crown of Portugal. He was extremely rich, and this was enough to attract the suspicious attention of the Count-Duke; but he only expended his wealth in harmless pursuits, and it seemed a waste of sagacity to look too sharply after lazy John. There he was at his paternal residence, Villa Viciosa—an ugly name for a delightful place—hunting, and feasting, and enjoying the company of boon companions, and never apparently allowing the thoughts of the morrow to interfere with the pleasures of the day. No creature in the world could look more innocuous.

In the mean while the storm was gathering. The citizens of Lisbon, stung to the quick by new taxes, were all astir, and were heard to pour disloyal benedictions on the House of Braganza. Duke John, whether he liked it or not, began to find his personal safety diminish. His removal was deemed expedient at Madrid, and the king very handsomely offered him the government of the Milanese. But his health, as he said, was delicate, and he was not well posted up in Italian politics; so, with all becoming gratitude, he declined the boon of his royal master. This bait not being honoured with so much as a nibble, another was tried. The turbulent Catalans were in open revolt against the Spanish government, and John was eventually advised to place himself at the head of the Portuguese nobility, and join an expedition, headed by the king in person, against the malcontents. Here the voice of duty, it seemed, would be sufficient to force the duke into active compliance; but the provoking man, rich as he was, now pleaded in formâ pauperis. The expenses necessary to keep up his dignity were so very heavy that he must really beg the minister to convey his respectable excuses to the king. A third plan was tried. France and Spain were at war with each other, and the French fleet had been observed off the Portuguese coast. A general was wanted for the western seaboard, and that post was offered to the Duke of Braganza, with powers so ample that it seemed as though, in an excess of blind confidence, all Portugal was delivered into his hands by Olivarez, while, in point of fact, Lopez Ozorio, the commander of the Spanish fleet, had orders to enter any port where he might expect to find the duke, and to secure his person. On this occasion Providence seemed to favour the House of Braganza. Ozorio was surprised by a violent tempest, which destroyed many of his ships, and so dispersed the rest, that it was impossible to effect a landing. Still Olivarez did not lose heart. He sent Duke John a pathetic letter, complaining of the misfortune which had befallen the fleet, and expressing the king's desire that he would visit all the ports that seemed accessible to France. The letter was accompanied by a large remittance to cover necessary expenses, but orders to arrest the duke were at the same time despatched to the governors of the ports.

Duke John accepted the honourable post, and pocketed the money: but he expended it in placing his most trusty friends at stations where they might best serve his purpose in case he thought of reascending the throne of his ancestors; and though he visited the required forts, he was always escorted by a guard sufficiently strong to avert personal danger; taking care wherever he went to augment his popularity by showing himself to the greatest advantage. While he was thus gaining partisans in all

directions, his intendant, Pinto Ribeiro, a shrewd, active, ambitious man, was busy at Lisbon increasing—if, indeed, increase was possible—the hatred of the citizens against the Spaniards; raking up the memory of old grievances, and dwelling on those of recent date, as abominations not to be borne. Pinto had great talent for treading on the most susceptible corn of the person he addressed. If he had to deal with a merchant, he expatiated on the ruin of commerce by the transfer of the Indian trade to Cadiz; the clergy of Portuguese extraction were reminded that the loaves and fishes, so justly due to their piety and learning, were distributed among foreigners; the nobility were taught to regard the summons to Catalonia as a virtual sentence of banishment. If a man already sufficiently disaffected fell in his way, Pinto would sound him as to his disposition towards the duke, warning off all suspicion that he was acting under the direction of his master by artfully regretting his inert disposition and unpatriotic love of ease—qualities much to be lamented in the only man who could save his country from destruction. The general result of his operations was that he had gathered together a large number of the nobility, at the head of whom was Acunha, Archbishop of Lisbon, a learned prelate in high favour with his countrymen, and detested by the Spaniards, whom he hated cordially in return, on account of their preference for Noronha, Archbishop of Braga, who was a creature of the vice-queen and took some part in the government. Among the noble malcontents whom Pinto had assembled were Dom Miguel d'Almeida, a stern patriot, who had always refused to attend the court; Dom Antonio d'Almada, an intimate friend of the archbishop; his son-in-law, Dom Louis d'Acunha, the prelate's nephew; Dom Mello, titular master of the hounds, and George his brother; Pedro Mendoza and Dom Rodrigo de Saa. To the illustrious assembly Pinto delivered an inflammatory speech, which provoked an outburst of patriotic indignation, the Catalonian affair being the grievance which provoked the largest amount of wrath. But though hatred of the Spaniard was universal, opinions as to the future were at first divided. Some, with the example of the Netherlands before their eyes, were for a republic after the Dutch model; and by those who were for a monarchy, the Duke of Braganza, and the Duke of Aveiro—both of the Portuguese blood-royal—were respectively recommended as fitting occupants of the throne. However, before the meeting broke up, the archbishop contrived to obtain an unanimous vote for the Duke of Braganza, expatiating at large on the superior wealth, power, and virtues of the prince, and arguing that nobles could not conscientiously break their vow of allegiance to the King of Spain except in favour of the legitimate heir.

Deeming that the time had now arrived for the duke to take an active part in the movement, the ever-busy Pinto secretly wrote him a letter insisting on the expediency of showing himself in the capital, and there encouraging his partisans. Prudent John accordingly quitted Villa Viciosa and arrived at Almada, which is close to Lisbon, although on the opposite bank of the Tagus, as if he had merely come to inspect a fort in discharge of the duties recently imposed upon him; and the retinue that he brought with him made a strong impression. Being so near the Residence, he could not, in common courtesy, do less than pay a visit to the vice-queen; and he called upon her accordingly, accompanied by all the nobles, while the city gave every sign of a public festival. John, however, was not to be blinded by the applause of the mobile vulgus; so, when his visit had been duly paid, he went back to Almada without even stopping at his hotel in the capital. Pinto, appreciating the occasion, called the attention of the conspirators to the cautious disposition of the man of their choice; adding that advantage ought to be taken of his proximity, and that, pro bono publico, it would be expedient respectfully to force a crown upon a head so imperfectly occupied by ambitious thoughts. This counsel having been approved, a communication was opened, viâ Pinto, with the duke, who graciously consented to receive a deputation from the conspirators, consisting of, at most, three persons.

Almada, D'Almeida, and Mendoza, the chosen delegates, visited the duke by night, and the first of these, acting as spokesman, represented to him that his only place of safety was the throne, and that, if he claimed his rights, he might rely on the assistance of the nobles. Spain, he observed, was no longer the formidable power of the days of Charles the Fifth, and his son, having often been defeated by the French and the Dutch, and being now occupied with the Catalonian revolt, and ruled by a weak monarch, who was himself governed by an unpopular minister. Hopes,

too, were to be placed in the great Cardinal Richelieu, and in the advantages derived by Portugal from her extensive sea-board; nor was the fact to be overlooked that the removal of the greater part of the Spanish garrison to strengthen the army against the Catalans, rendered the actual moment especially propitious for revolt. The answer of Duke John was provokingly safe. In the main he thoroughly agreed with all that had been said, but he doubted whether the proper moment for decisive action had arrived.

Fortunately he had a wife of a stronger mind than his own—Louisa, daughter of the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, who, although a Spaniard, and, moreover, a relative of Olivarez, had no objection to sit on the throne of Portugal. To her, on his return to Villa Viciosa, he communicated all that had passed, and found that she thoroughly entered into the views of the conspirators. The court of Madrid, in the mean while, had been rendered uneasy by the duke's brilliant reception at Lisbon, and another stratagem was attempted. John was definitively ordered to show himself at Madrid, and report by word of mouth the real condition of Portuguese affairs. Here was an order that could not be slighted without open revolt and capture, but which involved utter destruction; so he was at his wit's end. He could only hope to gain time; and therefore, by the advice of his duchess, he despatched a trusty gentleman to the Spanish capital, who informed the king that his master was on his heels, and, to confirm the truth of his statement, fitted up an hotel for his reception. The delays that ensued were excused by various pretexts; and, in the mean while, Mendoza was sent by the conspirators to Villa Viciosa to caution the duke that his only choice was between death and a crown. A declaration by the duke that he was ready to put himself at the head of his partisans was the result of this mission; but again his old timidity recurred, and all the eloquence of his duchess and Pinto was required to keep his courage screwed to the sticking-place. At last he declared that if he was sure of the Portuguese capital, he would cause himself to be proclaimed king in all the other cities of the kingdom, and despatched Pinto to Lisbon with credentials for D'Almeida and Mendoza.

The conspirators had now a basis for action. Pinto, by means of two wealthy citizens, secured the adherence of the artisans, and on the 25th of November, 1640, a meeting was held at the hotel of Braganza, where it was made evident that there was a force, consisting of one hundred and fifty nobles, with their dependants, and about two hundred citizens and artisans, ready to do the work of insurrection. It was settled that the insurgents, in four divisions, should enter the palace at so many points, before the Spaniards could collect their forces. Dom Miguel d'Almeida was to attack the German guard at the entrance of the palace; Mello, and his brother Dom Estevan d'Accosta, at the head of the citizens, was to surprise a company of Spaniards who mounted guard every day before a part of the palace called the Fort; De Menejès, Manuel, Saa, and Pinto were to occupy the apartments of the hateful Vasconcellos, who was to be despatched at once; and Dom Antonio d'Almeida, Mendoza, Dom Carlos de Noronha, and Antonio de Saldanha were to secure the vice-queen and all the Spaniards in the palace, to use them, if necessary, as hostages. In the mean while, a few cavaliers were to go about the city, with some of the principal citizens, to proclaim Duke John of Braganza, King of Portugal. The first of December was fixed upon as the day on which this bold plan was to be carried into execution.

The deities, Pavor and Pallor, to whom Tullus Hostilius paid such extraordinary honour, seem to have been very busy with everybody concerned in this glorious revolution. No fewer than three panics, which occurred before the middle of December, varied the ennui of the genteel comedy with scenes of a broader sort of humour. There happened to be a certain enthusiastic patriot who was always declaiming in public against the tyranny of the Spaniards, and who had grown louder than ever on the subject of the hateful expedition to Catalonia. To him therefore, as a safe ally, did D'Almeida communicate the project of the conspirators; but he was alarmed as well as surprised to find his confidant suddenly cool down to the very freezing point of prudence, and throw cold water on the entire scheme. The sight of a sword, which D'Almeida drew, had indeed the effect of frightening the inconveniently prudent gentleman into a consent to join the conspiracy; but the others, when they heard what had happened, were so dreadfully uneasy, that they forced Pinto to write to the Duke of Braganza, and thus sprinkle upon him a little of the cold water in which they had been themselves immersed. Fortu-

nately Pinto, who alone kept up his courage, sent another letter, which arrived sooner than the first, and prevented the ill-effect which otherwise it would have certainly produced. As no mischief seemed to ensue from the supposed imbecility of the new conspirators, the panic soon died out, but it was speedily succeeded by panic the second. The secretary Vasconcellos was seen to embark on the Tagus, and immediately the plotters were impressed with the belief that he had found out all their doings, and was crossing the river to obtain additional assistance from the Spaniards. This panic was so great, that some thought of betaking themselves to England or Africa, to escape the horrible retribution which was doubtless in store for them. Great was the delight when the secretary came back home to the sound of soft music, having simply been invited to a fête; and probably when each conspirator looked into the face of his fellow he felt a little foolish. Surely all was right now. No! Panic the third was yet to come. George Mello, who lodged with one of his relations at some distance from the city, thought it would be at once handsome and expedient to make his kinsman acquainted with the conspiracy, and induce him to join it. The cousin, who was something of the same temperament as Almada's unlucky friend, seemed delighted at first, and when he and George parted for the night, it was understood that they would both set off on the following morning to join their brethren at Lisbon. But no sooner did George find himself alone in his own room, than he began to doubt that he had grievously misplaced his confidence. While he was walking up and down in a state of tremendous fidget, a confused sound of whispering voices struck his ear; and throwing open his window, he perceived his cousin in the act of mounting a horse. Down he went, sword drawn, forced the delinquent back into his own room, and kept safe guard over him till break of day, when he took him to Lisbon.

The first of December, which seemed as though it would never come, arrived at last, and early in the morning the conspirators, according to appointment, repaired to the hotels of the several chiefs. The ladies, it is recorded, took deep interest in the movement, one of them, Donna Filipa de Villenes, having especially distinguished herself like a Spartan mother of the olden time, arming her two sons with her own hands, exhorting them to exert themselves for the overthrow of tyranny, and promising them that she would not survive the failure of the noble enterprise. The day was passed in approaching the palace, most of the principal conspirators going in litters to avoid observation, and when all had reached the place of their destination they were so tremendously frightened that panic the fourth seemed to be upon the cards. Would eight o'clock P.M., the appointed hour of attack, ever be struck by any clock? Bang! The report of Pinto's pistol—the concerted signal—at last gives notice that the welcome hour has arrived, and the attack begins.

The German guards are beaten down at once by the party under Dom Miguel d'Almeida. The two Mellos and Dom Estevan d'Accosta charge the Spanish company, followed by the greater number of the citizens who had joined in the conspiracy: but the victory of this party was chiefly due to a zealous priest, who, with a sword in one hand, and a crucifix in the other, made every one fly before him. Pinto and his party proceeded, as agreed, to the apartments of Vasconcellos, and at the foot of the staircase encountered an unfortunate magistrate, who, mistaking the uproar for a common brawl, ordered the rioters to retire. When, however, he heard the shout "Braganza for ever!" he felt officially bound to utter the counter-cry "Long live the King of Spain and Portugal!" and received as the price of his loyalty a pistol-shot, which killed him on the spot. Next came Antonio Correa, the secretary's principal clerk, who had hurried out to see what was the matter, and was stabbed several times by Meneiès, but not mortally wounded. When the secretary's ante-room was entered, the doomed man was with Diego Garcez Palleio, a captain of infantry, who at a glance perceived the state of the case. From sheer gallantry Diego drew his sword, and attempted to prevent the assailants from entering the inner door, but as he was wounded in the shoulder, and likewise overpowered by numbers, he soon deemed it expedient to leap from the window, and was fortunate enough not to break his neck.

This little impediment removed, the chamber was entered; but no secretary was visible. Then what a tumbling and knocking about ensued! Tables were overturned; boxes were torn open; nooks and corners were searched. Everybody was anxious to get the honour of giving Vasconcellos his first stab, and everybody was cursing his disappointment. At last an

old female, threatened with death, was unromantic enough to prefer her own safety to her master's, and without saying a word, pointed to a closet in the thickness of the wall, and this being opened, the missing man was found buried alive under a heap of papers. The terror of Vasconcellos exceeded the fright, that on any preceding occasion had been felt by any of the conspirators, and he was unable to utter a word. Nor was there any demand for his discourse; Dom Rodrigo de Saa, firing a pistol, began the work of vengeance, which was completed by several stabs; and when the unfortunate man was dead his body was flung out of window to be stabbed anew by the people below, amid shouts in honour of liberty and John, King of Portugal.

This operation performed, Pinto set off to join the other insurgents, who were to occupy the vice-regal apartments, and was glad to find that they were perfectly successful. In answer to the menaces of the persons who besieged the door, and further moved by the howls of the populace without, who threatened to fire the palace, the vice-queen, accompanied by her maids of honour and the Archbishop of Braga, tried to make the best of the situation. Cordially detesting the secretary, as a low person placed over her head, she could honestly admit that he had fully deserved his fate, and requested the conspirators to retire as quickly and as quietly as possible, that she might be able to make a good case for them with the king. The slight misunderstanding exhibited in her very civil address was speedily corrected by Menejès, who entreated her not to suppose for a moment that the movement had been organized for the mere purpose of getting rid of a wretch so despicable as Vasconcellos. No, their object was to place John of Braganza on the throne, of which he had been unjustly deprived by usurpers. Changing her plan, the vice-queen now expressed a desire to appear before the people, and awe them by the majesty of her presence. The Duke of Noronha assuring her that she possibly over-valued the expedient, which might be rather perilous than otherwise, she asked what the people could possibly do to *her?* "Nothing at all," replied the courteous duke, "but throw your highness out of window." This curt answer so highly infuriated the bold Archbishop of Braga that he snatched a sword from a soldier, and was about to rush on the conspirators, but he was promptly held back by Dom Miguel d'Almeida, and peace, such as could be had, was preserved.

The rest of the work was easily done. The most obnoxious persons were secured without difficulty, persons imprisoned by the Spaniards were released, and Count Antonio Saldanha formally proclaimed John of Braganza, King of Portugal. There was only this little difficulty, that the citadel was still in the hands of the Spaniards. Application was therefore made to the vice-queen, who was required to sign an order for the governor to deliver it into her hands; and though she at first refused, the threat of D'Almeida to stab her on the spot, enforced her compliance. The necessary order was therefore obtained, and Dom Louis de Campeo, the governor of the citadel, was only too glad to find himself authorised in retreating from his dangerous post. A provisional government being formed under the presidency of the Archbishop of Lisbon, with whom were joined Miguel d'Almeida, Pedro Mendoza, and Antonio d'Almada as councillors, its first office was to seize three Spanish vessels in the port of Lisbon, and to order the provincial magistrate to proclaim the Duke of Braganza as king.

But of all the people who had felt alarmed during the progress of the revolution none was more terribly frightened than the Duke of Braganza himself, who while his victory was preparing at Lisbon, remained shaking in his shoes at the Villa Viciosa, about thirty leagues distant from the citadel. His first notion was to excite the inhabitants of all the towns immediately subject to his dominion, but he afterwards thought it would be safer to see which way the wind blew, and to keep quiet till intelligence from Lisbon had arrived. The province Algare was his, at all events, and thither he could retire, and perhaps make the king believe that he had nothing to do with the insurrection. The Spaniards were not very strong at that moment, and would perhaps be ready enough to feign a conviction of his innocence without asking troublesome questions.

His mind was made up in the right direction, when Mendoza and Mello, who had hurried themselves to the utmost, arrived at Villa Viciosa with glorious news from Lisbon, throwing themselves at his knees, and thus letting him know, before they had spoken a word, that he was already a king. At once he conducted them to the apartments of the Duchess, whom they likewise saluted with the most profound respect,

affording especial pleasure by the use of the word "majesty." Never had such honour been paid before. The old kings of Portugal had simply been regarded as "highnesses."

Even now the natural cautiousness of the new king was not quite overcome. On his way to the capital he pretended that he was merely engaged in some field-sport, lest he might awaken suspicion in an unlucky quarter; but a courier from the archbishop, who met him about half-way with an important despatch, so completely reassured him as to render further vacillation impossible. He at once hastened to the bank of the Tagus, and finding two fishermen with a barque, crossed over to Lisbon, and landed at the gate of the palace, where an enthusiastic throng was ready to receive him, nobody suspecting that the little insignificant boat contained the object of their anxiety. Indeed he passed through the crowd unnoticed, and it was not till he had been placed on the throne, which stood on a sort of scaffold, that he was saluted amid general acclamations as King of Portugal. On the 15th of the month he was crowned in the cathedral with all possible magnificence. On this grand tableau let the curtain fall.

A QUESTION OF PRIORITY.

Before entering on the particular question to which I am about to refer, let me preface it, as the late excellent President Lincoln was accustomed to preface his arguments, by "a little story." The story occurs in that delightful collection, the Arabian Nights, which every sane man and woman and child has read, or ought to read, and narrates how a certain merchant fell into a very singular difficulty. The merchant was engaged in eating dates by the roadside under the shadow of a tree, thinking harm of no one, and throwing away the date-stones right and left. Suddenly a furious genius of enormous stature started up, the merchant knew not whence, with a naked scimitar in his hand, and advanced towards him, threatening to kill him.

"Of what crime, alas! can I, my good lord, have been guilty towards you, to deserve the loss of life?" said the merchant.

"I have sworn to slay thee, as thou hast slain my son!"

"Good God!" answered the merchant, "how can I have slain him? I do not know him, nor have I ever seen him."

"Didst thou not," said the monster, "take some dates from thy wallet, and throw away the stones?"

"It is true," replied the merchant; "I don't deny it."

"Well, then," said the genius, "thou hast slain my son. Whilst thou wast throwing away thy date-stones, my son passed by. One of them struck him in the eye, and caused his death!"

Now I, as innocently as the good merchant, got myself, unwittingly, into a similar dilemma, by writing a paper in All the Year Round entitled, A Question of Ancestry: in which I examined with, as I thought, the utmost good faith and impartiality, the theory and statements put forth in a very interesting volume, entitled The Pedigree of the English, by Dr. Thomas Nicholas (second edition), 1868. The object of Dr. Nicholas's book was to show that the English were not so much an Anglo-Saxon as a Celtic people, and that the old histories, based upon the sole authority of the ignorant monk Gildas, were in this respect untrustworthy. I thought the argument, as stated and enforced by Dr. Nicholas, a very good argument, and I adhere to that opinion still. Eating, as it were, my dates, and throwing away the stones—or, as it might be, rejecting what was not to my literary palate—it appears that an invisible genius—invisible and unknown to me—of the name of Luke Owen Pike—a Master of Arts, of Lincoln's-inn, Barrister-at-Law—was passing by, and that he was hit very hard indeed by the fact of my not noticing a book on the very same subject which he had published in the year 1866. My excuses to Mr. Pike must be the same as those which the merchant offered to the genius—that I did not see his son, or, in other words, his book, and that I was not aware of its existence. My case, however, was not so bad as that of the merchant. I did not slay Mr. Pike's mental progeny, and have since had very great pleasure in making its living acquaintance. By the evidence of the title-page, it is clear that it was published two years prior to the book of Dr. Nicholas; Mr. Pike has an application to the Court of Chancery pending, on the ground that Dr. Nicholas has pirated his book. At this present writing it is pending, but has not been heard. The theory of both writers is the same; the demolition of Gildas is equally ruthless by both; and their belief in the preponderance of the Celtic over the Anglo-Saxon blood, in all except a very few counties, is alike enthusiastic. Mr. Pike's book is entitled The English and their Origin: a Prologue to Authentic English History. Neither Mr. Pike nor Dr. Nicholas has exhausted the inquiry, for it has yet to be taken up by some one who understands other branches of the old Celtic language than the Welsh. Mr. Pike makes no pretension to a knowledge of Erse and Gaelic, and Dr. Nicholas makes very little. Mr. Pike rightly says, in the concluding paragraph of his volume, "The field is open, of course, to every student to form his own ethnological conclusions. For my own part, I shall be content if others are found to do better what I have here attempted to do. The road which I have passed over is somewhat rugged in places, but it has been a very pleasant road to me, and I have done what little I could to make it smooth and pleasant

for my successors." Mr. Pike quotes a very long list of the authorities and documents which he consulted in the composition of his work, but does not quote Dr. Nicholas—for the sufficient reason that Dr. Nicholas had not then written on the subject. Dr. Nicholas also quotes his authorities, among which the book of Mr. Pike does *not* appear.

THE BROWN-PAPER PARCEL.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER V.

THE result of the above conversation was that, early in the afternoon of the following day, the village street of Farley was enlivened by the appearance of Mr. Langley's barouche, with Mrs. Lester inside. The powdered footman attached to this equipage, descending at the curate's door, gave such a succession of bangs with the rarely used knocker, that the whole house shook, and poor Mrs. Mackworth nearly jumped out of her chair. In another moment the open-eyed maid-servant had shown in Mrs. Lester: a mass of black velvet and white fur, so flowing and voluminous that the tiny square parlour seemed hardly large enough to contain her drapery.

Mrs. Mackworth, always gentle and self-possessed, was not at all discomposed by this apparition, nor by the consciousness of her own well-worn merino, and the ungainly basket of tattered garments, which lay, as usual, at her feet.

Mary was in the kitchen, her sleeves tucked up and her arms all over flour, engaged in the manufacture of certain cakes, the recipe for which she had obtained from Mrs. Halroyd's cook, and which were destined to tempt Cilla's fanciful appetite at supper. She was singing gaily at her work, when Cilla burst in, her pale cheeks flushed scarlet, her blue eyes dancing with excitement.

"Mary! Mary! What do you think? Mrs. Lester is here—in the parlour with mamma—oh! my hair! my hair!"

"Oh! my cakes! my cakes!" said Mary; "however they're in a state that they can be left, luckily." And as soon as she could free her hands from flour, and divest herself of the great apron which defended her dress, she helped to arrange those bright tanglesome locks of Cilla's, which never would lie flat, but which happily looked all the prettier for disarray.

The sisters entered together to hear Mrs. Mackworth saying:

"It is very, very kind, and it would be a great pleasure to the girls, and my son too—but I don't know."

"I must get them to intercede," said Mrs. Lester, as she shook hands with Mary and gave a kind greeting to Cilla: "my brother has charged me to say how much he hopes you will all come to his ball on the 13th. Mrs. Mackworth says it is out of the question for herself or Mr. Mackworth; but as I tell her, I should be charmed to be your chaperone. Persuade her to let you come."

Mary and Cilla looked at each other, and never did two pair of eyes beam with greater delight. But then Mary glanced at her mother.

"If you don't mind our going, mamma, I can manage everything," said Mary, in a low voice.

The end of the discussion was that Mrs. Mackworth promised to consult her husband, and, if he gave his consent, to allow her daughters and son to go to this famous ball.

So when the curate came home in the evening, he found all his household in a state of feminine bustle; a snowy shower of muslin heaped on the sofa: and a bewildering mass of ribbons and tapes lying on the table. As he stood amazed at the door, Cilla danced up to him, all excitement, with the wonderful news that they were going to the Nettlehurst ball; Mary hastily adding that it depended on whether he liked them to do so.

"My dears, do you really wish to go? Won't you feel very much at a loss? You can't dance, any of you."

"Can't we, indeed?" cried Mary, "haven't I sat by and seen Carrie and Archie figuring away under Mr. Caracol, every Friday of my life for the last two years? I will undertake to coach Harry and Cilla—if we may, papa."

"But your clothes? Where is the money for them to come from?"

"I believe Mary is a conjurer," said her mother; "she produced all this finery at a moment's notice."

And then Mary began explaining how she had bought the white muslin some months before, when she found it necessary to have a best evening dress for Carrie's birthday, and how, just as she had done so, Mrs. Halroyd had made her a present of another white muslin, ready made up, silk under skirt, and all.

"So the new muslin will just come in for Cilla, and she can have the silk petticoat," said Mary, eagerly; "and all this green ribbon, her own favourite green, will run under the muslin—all about—so. How lucky I brought it for her!"

"And yourself, Mary?" asked the curate, who had listened with some amusement to this explanation.

"Oh! my dress will do up nicely: I can make it quite fresh with a little ironing and plaiting," said Mary, briskly. "Only say we may, papa!"

Though all papa said was "Foolish children!" it was said with a smile which made his daughters fly round him with kisses and delighted thanks.

A very pleasant little note from Mrs. Lester arrived a few days before the ball, hoping that they would allow the brougham to be sent for them, and reminding the sisters that they were to consider themselves in her charge for the evening.

At last came the great day itself; and a busy, bustling, happy day it was, such as young ladies who go habitually to two or three balls a night can form no idea of. Such a perpetual buzz of chatter and laughing went on, as would have driven the curate wild, but for his peculiar power of abstracting himself from what went on about him. But even he showed some interest when the girls made their appearance in the parlour early in the evening, ready dressed, in order that they might not keep the brougham one moment waiting.

Laurry and Jack, who had insisted on the unwonted extravagance of two pairs of candles, in order that their sisters' magnificence might appear to advantage, capered about in a high state of excitement, in dangerous proximity to the floating muslin robes.

"You really are worth looking at, I must say," cried Mr. Mackworth, smiling approvingly; while his wife's eyes glistened with pride at sight of her bright pair of girls.

"Doesn't Cilla look charming?" Mary cried, her eyes riveted on her sister: who certainly did look remarkably pretty in the white draperies, exquisitely fresh and crisp, as if the sewing and trimming had been performed by fairy fingers; wavy lines of green, pale yet bright, wandered about under the muslin, and peeped out more decidedly in the folds of the bodice; and a wreath of real holly encircled the small head, only the green, white-speckled leaves in front, and a few bright berries mixing with her soft, loose hair at the back, like coral set in gold. Mary's best care and skill had not been able to give her own often-worn dress quite the fresh, full sit of her sister's, but it was well made and appropriate, and a few bright dashes of holly trimmed it here and there, matching the wreath, in which, mindful of her own dark colouring, Mary had left a larger number of berries than she had allowed to Cilla. Nothing could have been more becoming than the rich full colour was to her; and at her openly expressed admiration of Cilla, the parents exchanged a smile which meant that Mary herself was by no means unworthy of being admired and sought after. Harry appeared to less advantage than his sisters. It was not in Mary's power to make his dress anything very first rate; and he was at the age when a lad is painfully conscious that he has ceased to be a boy, and is a very poor imitation of a man.

The brougham arrived, the trio started, and, after a rather nervous and silent drive through the dark lanes, entered the gates of Nettlehurst, and came in sight of the house, blazing with lights: the conservatory, with its coloured lamps and lovely flowers, looking like an enchanted palace.

The library was the reception-room, as the drawing-room was given up to the dancers. At the door stood Mrs. Lester, in the handsome black robes which she had never cast off since her early widowhood. Her cordial greeting set the fluttered girls at once at their ease. The brougham had been sent so early that they were almost the first arrivals. Very soon Mr. Langley joined them:

"I am so very glad to see you here," he said to Mary; "I was afraid Mr. Mackworth would not let you come now."

"He was very glad for us to have the pleasure," said Mary.

"Yes, but I feared that now perhaps he might change his mind. It would have been very cruel."

"But why should he?" asked Mary, bewildered.

"Have you not heard——?" Mr. Langley was beginning; but a fresh arrival called him away, and the guests began rapidly to assemble.

It was a great amusement to Mary to watch them, and to see so many people who had hitherto been only names to her. All the higher class of professional people from Brigham were the first to arrive: and a little later the county families, of whom there were many. Mary noticed with what marked cordiality they appeared to welcome the banker into their ranks, and her heart swelled with a feeling of pride, for which she laughed at herself, as she recalled all she had lately heard her father and brother say of the high reputation for honour, libera-

lity, and public spirit which Mr. Langley had always borne.

"As if I had any right to feel proud of him!" she thought, and then glanced at Cilla, the real object of her pride; and a delightful vision began to float before her, dispersed in a moment as she remembered how papa would despise such castle building. Mrs. Lester did not forget her young charges: she had promised her brother to be kind to them, and she thoroughly fulfilled her promise. She had little difficulty in finding partners for two such attractive girls; and indeed when Cilla had once been noticed, her chaperone had numerous applications for an introduction. Mary's bright eyes danced with pleasure as she watched her sister, and Mrs. Lester looked at her often and with much interest.

"She is the nicest girl I ever saw in my life," Mrs. Lester thought: "and if it is to be, I won't forbid the banns. Still it would be a pity." And she glanced at her brother who was dancing with a very handsome girl, daughter to one of the county magnates.

It was not until late in the evening that Mr. Langley came up to Mary again.

Cilla, who had just been dancing, was resting on a seat, looking flushed and weary, but full of enjoyment. Mary had had her share of dancing too; Harry alone had found the evening rather slow.

"Won't you come and have something to eat? The hall is open now."

Mary and Mr. Langley passed into the conservatory, which opened also into the hall, now converted into a supper-room.

"What a crowd of people!" he said, pausing. "Don't you think it would be better to stay here among the orange-trees than to plunge into that hungry multitude? Shall I get you something? An ice?"

"If you please," said Mary, and they were soon comfortably established on two low green seats in the conservatory. The coloured lamps twinkled among the dark foliage, bright figures passed and repassed, a soft continuous ripple of voice and laughter mingled with the music from the ball-room.

"I have been trying to get near you all this evening, but I have been obliged to attend to so many people. I hope my sister has taken care of you."

"She has been so very kind, and my sister and I have enjoyed ourselves extremely."

"I suppose it is her first ball—and yours too. Is it?"

Mary laughed:

"Our first, and probably our last. You do not know what a treat you have given us: it was so very kind of you and Mrs. Lester to think of asking us."

"Kind?" he repeated, smiling; "it was very kind of you to come, I think."

"By-the-by," asked Mary, suddenly, "what did you mean by asking me if we had heard something?"

"You have not heard it, evidently," said Mr. Langley, hesitating. "I am sorry I said anything about it. Is there no second post at Farley?"

"Not unless we send to Brigham."

"That accounts for it; they wrote to tell me as soon as it happened. Poor old Dr. Lowther died yesterday morning."

Mary felt shocked.

"I had no idea he was really ill," she said in an awe-struck voice.

"It is the old story of boy and wolf," said Mr. Langley. "Poor old fellow! I really fancy he might have lived to ninety if he could have thought less about his health; but a man can't go on taking physic all his life without taking too much of it at last."

"Poor Dr. Lowther! I hardly knew him, but he used to be kind to us when we were little. Once he gave me a prayer-book. I wonder," Mary added, after a pause, "who our new rector will be!"

Mr. Langley hesitated. Mary looked up, and saw something in his face which made her fancy that her remark had been somehow mal-apropos.

"I beg your pardon," she said, instinctively.

"For what?" he asked, amused by her perplexity; "I only thought that perhaps you knew the Farley living to be in my gift. I bought it with the Nettlehurst estate. I hoped—I do hope—" Mr. Langley hesitated. "Do you think that Mr. Mackworth would kindly undertake the responsibility? He has long done all the work, I know."

Mary's breath was absolutely taken away by surprise and emotion. She looked up with a wondering, incredulous gaze: then tried to speak; then stopped, and nearly broke down altogether. Mr. Langley brought her a glass of water.

"I am ashamed of myself," she said, as soon as she could; then his looks of warm interest encouraging her to speak frankly, she went on. "But you don't know the relief! You don't know what life has been all these years for papa and mamma, Cilla and Harry. They will thank you better than

I can." She held out her hand, looking up to him with glad tearful eyes. Mr. Langley pressed the hand warmly, as if the thanksgiving look had gone to his heart.

"Nobody need thank me, Heaven knows, except the people of Farley. What would they be without Mr. Mackworth? I believe the rectory is in pretty good repair, and the garden well kept up; but Mr. Mackworth and I must go over it together."

"It is perfect," said Mary, as a vision of the pleasant roomy house and bowery garden rose before her. "Thank you, thank you! You may think I care a great deal about money, but it is not that. It is such pain to see one's own dear people wanting anything, and not to be able to give it to them."

"You will, at all events, be freed from your slavery now, I hope," said Mr. Langley.

Mary looked surprised.

"I have nothing to complain of, though it will be nice to be at home of course, nicer than anything."

"A fine lad your brother is. Does he think of the church?"

"No, he wishes for the army, but lately he has been thinking of going into Mr. Bagshawe's office. He hated the idea, but he wouldn't trouble papa with making difficulties. He is so unselfish," said the sister, proudly. "But there will be no trouble about the army now, thanks to you."

Mr. Langley was touched by this simple girl's great idea of the capabilities of their new income.

"How should *I* feel?" he thought, "if I were obliged to live on nine hundred a year! Well; this lad's commission may be a means of paying my five hundred pounds."

"You will let me come to-morrow?" he said aloud: "I must see your father, and go over the rectory with him; and I shall see you too, shall I not?"

"Certainly," said Mary; "I don't go back to London until the 20th."

"And then only to say good-bye to it, I hope. A new dance is beginning, will you come?"

As Mary rose, she could not help saying, "I seem to have been talking of nothing but my home concerns."

"You could not have given me greater pleasure," was the answer. "Miss Mackworth, I must say it. Whatever happens hereafter, I shall never forget what I owe to that brown-paper parcel."

At night, when all the guests were gone, Mr. Langley, pacing the deserted conservatory with a cigar, mused much as follows.

"She is too grateful to me—by far too grateful. When she looked up at me with those innocent thankful eyes, I could hardly help speaking then and there: but I must wait till she forgets that I am something of a benefactor, and only remembers me as a friend. Please God, the best friend she will ever have! O blessings on the fog, and on the snow, and on the brown-paper parcel, and on the hansom, and on everything else. And blessings on old Lowther, wherever he is now, for going off at the convenient moment! Well, to-morrow I shall see her again—those clear eyes that went straight to my heart in the cold and dark that day; and the sweet smile, and the earnest quiet mouth, worth all her sister's beauty, twenty thousand times! If her heart is not too full of father and mother, and sister and brothers, to leave one corner for me! Well, I must hope and try, and I shall see her again to-morrow."

And at the same hour, Mary, who kept her precious secret for the morrow to disclose, lying wakeful beside her sleeping sister, poured out her earnest thanksgivings for troubles over, and peace beginning.

"How kind he is!" she thought with tears. "How nicely he spoke of Harry! How he listened when I talked so much! How could I talk so much to a stranger? But somehow, I don't feel as if he were a stranger; I feel as if he must belong to us some day. Is that prophetic, I wonder! Is he to be the knight I have always dreamed of, who was to come and carry off my Cilla? May be. And yet, I don't know. There are some people in the world who seem too good for any one—even for Cilla."

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read on Wednesday, March 31, at Sheffield; Thursday, April 1, and Friday, April 2, Birmingham; Monday, April 5, Tuesday, April 6, Thursday, April 8, and Friday, April 9, Liverpool; Tuesdays, April 13, 27, May 11, and 25, St. James's Hall, London.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IX. SUCCESS ACHIEVED.

THE step which Mr. Creswell took in asking Marian Ashurst to become his wife was not taken without due care and consideration. As, during a lifetime which had now exceeded half a century, he had been accustomed to ponder over, sift, and weigh the most minor details of even trivial schemes before carrying them out, it was not likely that he would give less attention to a plan, on the successful or unsuccessful result of which his whole hope of future earthly happiness or misery might be based. The plan presented itself to him squarely and from a business-like point of view, like all other plans which he entertained, and had two aspects—as to how it would affect himself and how it would affect others. He took it under the first aspect, and thought it out carefully. His was a loving nature, always desiring something to cherish and cling to. In bygone years he had had his wife, whom he had worshipped with all the warmth of his loving nature. She had been the sharer of his struggles, but it had not been permitted to her to take part in his success; doubtless for the best, for Mr. Creswell, like all men who have been thoroughly successful, and with whom everything has gone straight, had perfect trust and reliance on the dispensations of Providence, she had been removed before his position was acquired. But she had left behind her a son for whom that position was destined, for whom his father slaved for years, adding to his wealth and establishing his name, all the while hoping against hope that the boy might one day learn how to use the former and how to maintain the latter. As the lad grew up, and year by year showed his real nature more and more, so the hope grew fainter and fainter in the father's heart, until it was finally extinguished by Tom's death. And then he had no hope left in the world, or rather he would have had none had it not been for Marian. It seemed as though matters had been providentially arranged, Mr. Creswell thought. The dependent state of Marian and her mother, his power of assisting them, their being domiciled under his roof, which had given him such opportunity of studying Marian's character, and had so entirely reversed his original opinion of her, the assistance and support she had afforded him during that sad period of poor Tom's death. All seemed predestined and pre-arranged. He knew her now. It was not like taking a girl with whom his acquaintance had been slight, or even one whom he might have thought he knew intimately, but whom he had only seen on her society behaviour, or in such guise as she would naturally affect before any one whom she knew to be noticing her with an object. He had seen Marian Ashurst under all circumstances, and in all places. Under the strongest and hardest trial he had always seen her come out brightest and best, and he had had full opportunity of observing the sterling worth of her character. Was the end of all his life of toil and strife to be an unloved and unloving old age? Was the position which he had acquired to benefit no one but himself, and to die out with him? Was the wealth which he had amassed to be filtered away into dirty channels, or left for the benefit of charities? If these questions were to be answered in the negative, where could he find such a helpmate as Marian, where

could he dream of looking for such another? His conduct could scarcely be characterised as selfish, he thought, if after the life of work and anxiety which he had passed, he tried to render its latter portion peaceful and happy, and that, he felt, was only to be done by his marriage with Marian.

So much for himself, but how would it affect others. Marian, first? Mr. Creswell was so true and so honourable a man that even in a case like the present, where the interest of his future was at stake, he would not have used an argument, in the firm basis of which he did not himself believe. In pleading his cause to Marian, he had somewhat enlarged upon the responsibility laid on her in regard to her mother —responsibility which, he argued, would be considerably lightened, if not entirely removed, by her acceptance of the position which he offered her. He believed this firmly, setting it down as an undoubted gain to Marian, who would also have position, wealth, a home, and a protector. What on the other side—what, as they said in business, per contra—what would she lose? He hoped, nothing. To many girls, to most girls, a husband old enough to be their father would have been in the highest degree objectionable; but Marian was so different to any girls he had ever seen. She was so staid, so decorous, so old-fashioned; her life had been one of such quietude and earnestness; she had always been associated with people so much older than herself. And then she had never had any love-affair! Mr. Creswell thanked Heaven for that! He could not fancy anything worse than playing the part of Auld Robin Gray in the ballad, and being received and accepted for the sake of his money, and more than that, causing the rejection of a poorer suitor! That would be too dreadful! No! Marian had not been thrown in the way of that kind of thing; her father had neither entertained company nor taken her into society, and there was no one in the village, Mr. Creswell thought with a grave smile, who would have ventured to uplift his eyes towards her. He should not expect from her any romantic worship, any girlish devotion, but, at all events, she would come to him heart-whole, without any remains of previous attachments or bygone passions.

Who else would be affected by this marriage? His nieces. At least, so the world would think and say, but he should take care that the world was wrong. On the contrary, if anybody rather benefited by the step he was about to take, it should be those girls; principally because they were the persons who would be selected for the world's pity, and also because, he could not tell why, he rather disliked them. It was very wrong, he knew, and he had often reasoned with himself and struggled hard against it, but the result was always the same. They were no companions for him. He had tried very hard to make himself feel interested in them, but, beyond his natural kinsman interest and compassion for their forlorn state of orphanage, without effect. He had examined himself as to the cause of this want of interest, and had explained to himself that they were "frivolous;" by which he meant that they had no notions of business, of money, of responsibility, of the various items which make up the serious side of life. All those qualities which made up the charms of Marian Ashurst were wanting in these girls. In reality they were not in the least frivolous; they were far better educated and informed than most young ladies of their class, and one of them, Maud, had superior natural gifts. But they were not after their uncle's bent, and he could not make them so. That, however, was the exact reason why a man with such a keen sense of honour as Mr. Creswell should treat them with even extra consideration, and should be more than ever cautious that no such proceeding as his marriage should injure them in any possible way. He thought it was due to the girls, as well as advisable for many reasons, that they should be made acquainted with the forthcoming change as speedily as possible, and he took an opportunity of saying so to Marian on the Sunday evening. Marian quite agreed with him. She had never been enthusiastic on the subject of the girls, and she did not pretend to be now.

"It would only be right that they should know it at once!" she said. "I had rather, if you please, that you should tell them! It will come from you better than from me! I suppose I shall get on very well with them!"

"Get on very well with them!" repeated Mr. Creswell. "With the girls? Why of course you will, dearest. What reason could there be why you should not get on with them?"

"Oh, none in the least!—of course not! It was a silly remark of mine!"

Mr. Creswell knew that she never made silly remarks; one of his avowed boasts

about her was, that she never spoke without thinking, and always spoke at the right time. He felt a little uncomfortable therefore, and dropped the subject, saying, "I will tell them, then, to-morrow morning. Did you speak to Mrs. Ashurst?"

"I did!"

"And she——?"

"She is almost as happy as her daughter, at the thought! Is that sufficient?"

"God bless her!" said Mr. Creswell. "Her comfort shall be our first care! Ah, Marian, you are an angel!" And Marian thought it mattered very little how the young ladies might receive the announcement of their uncle's intended marriage, so long as their uncle held that last expressed opinion.

The next morning, while the young ladies were at their music practice, they received a message that their uncle wished to see them. It was not meant to be a formal message, but it certainly smacked somewhat of formality. Hitherto, whenever their uncle wanted them, he had been in the habit of either coming to their room, or of calling them to him. Maud looked astonished at the solemnity of the phrase "wishes to see you" as the servant delivered it, while Gertrude raised her eyebrows at her sister, and audibly wondered what it meant.

They found their uncle seated in his library, the desk before him as usual heaped with papers and accounts, and plenty of Miss Ashurst's handwriting, so horribly neat and so painfully legible, as Gertrude described it, to be seen everywhere. Mr. Creswell rose as they entered, and received them with all his usual kindness; Maud thought his manner was a little flurried and his face a little pale, but she could not gather from anything she saw the reason of their summons. Gertrude had made up her mind that somebody, she did not know who, had proposed for Maud; but then she could not see why she was required to be present at the announcement.

There was rather an uncomfortable hitch in the proceedings at first, Mr. Creswell obviously finding it difficult to touch upon the topic which he had to treat, and the girls having no topic to touch upon. At length, Maud broke the silence by saying, "You sent for us, uncle! You wished to see us!"

"Yes, my dears—yes, girls, I wanted to see you, and I asked the servant to beg you to step here, as I had something special that I wanted to say to you, for you know, my dear children, that since you came to live with me, I have always treated you as if you were my daughters—at least, I hope I have; it has been my wish to do so!"

"You always have done so, uncle!" said Maud, decisively.

"Always, uncle!" echoed Gertrude, who was best as chorus.

"That's right, my dears. I'm glad you've found it so, as I intended it. So long as I live you will find that you will be treated in the same way, and I have made such provision for you in my will as I would have made for my own daughters, if it had pleased God to give me any. Having told you this, it's right that I should tell you of something which is going to happen in this house, though it won't make any difference in your position, nor any difference to you at all that I know of, but yet it's right you should be made acquainted with it. I'm—I'm going to be married!"

There was a pause for an instant, and then it was Gertrude spoke.

"To be married!" she said. "You going to be married! Oh, uncle, I know to whom! I'm sure I can guess!"

"Guess, then, my dear," said Mr. Creswell.

"To dear old Mrs. Ashurst, isn't it?" cried Gertrude. "I'm sure it is! She is the very kindest, sweetest old thing! and if she only had better health—I'm right, uncle, am I not?—it is Mrs. Ashurst!"

"No, my dear," said Mr. Creswell, with hesitating voice and glowing cheeks—"no, my dear, it's not Mrs. Ashurst!"

"Ah, then, it's some one you have met away from Woolgreaves, away from the neighbourhood, some one we don't know!"

"No, indeed!" said Mr. Creswell, "it is some one you know very well, and I hope love very much. It is Marian—Miss Ashurst."

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Gertrude.

"I wish you all happiness, dear uncle," said Maud, rising from her seat, crossing to her uncle, and bending down to kiss him as he sat.

"So do I, dear uncle," said Gertrude, following her sister.

"Thank you, my dears," said Mr. Creswell; "thank you very much. I said before, that nothing should make any difference in your position here, nor in my intentions for the future—nor will it. Besides, it isn't as if it were a stranger—you've known Marian so long——"

"Oh yes, we've known Miss Ashurst for some time!" said Maud, with emphasis.

"Exactly!" said Mr. Creswell. "As I say, it isn't as if it were a stranger! Marian has been domiciled with us now for some time, and there is no reason why, so far as you and she are concerned, things should not go on exactly as they have done! At least, I know this to be her wish and mine!" he added, after a short pause.

"Whatever is your wish, uncle, I'm sure Gertrude and I will be delighted to fulfil——"

"Delighted!" interposed Gertrude.

"And I don't think Miss Ashurst will find us give her any trouble!"

"Miss Ashurst! Why not speak of her as Marian, my dear?" said Mr. Creswell.

"She has always been Miss Ashurst to me hitherto, and you know I'm not going to marry her, uncle!" said Maud, almost brusquely.

"What do you think of Miss A. now?" said Gertrude, when the girls were back in their room. "I used to laugh about her being superior! But she has shown herself superior to us with a vengeance! Fancy having her for an aunt, and having to ask her permission to do this and that, and go here and there! Oh my! Why don't you speak, Maud—why don't you say something about all this?"

"Because I can't trust myself to speak," said Maud, hurriedly. "Because I'm afraid of blurting out something that were better left unsaid."

"Oh, then, you're not so pleased at the connexion! I'm sure by the way in which you wished your uncle happiness, one would have thought that the dearest wish of your heart had been realised. What do you think of Miss A.'s conduct, I mean as regards this matter?"

"Just what I think of it, and have always thought of it as regards every other matter, that it is selfish, base, and deceitful. That woman came here with a predetermined plan of marrying uncle, and chance has helped her to carry it into effect, even more quickly than she anticipated. Tom saw that, he told us so, if you recollect. Poor Tom! he was a dull, unpleasant lad, but he was wonderfully shrewd, and he saw through this woman's tactics in a minute, and determined to spoil them. He would have done so, had he lived, and now, I've no doubt that the very fact of his death has been the means of hurrying uncle into taking this step!"

"Do you think Miss A. cares for uncle, Maud?"

"Cares for him—what do you mean?"

"Well, of course, I don't mean to be awfully fond, and all that sort of thing, like lovers, you know, and all that! What do you think she — well, she's fond of him?"

"Of *him?* No! she's fond of his name and his position, his money and his influence! She's fond of Woolgreaves, she has become accustomed to its comforts, and she does not choose to give them up!"

"I don't know that Miss A. is to be particularly pitched into for that, Maud," said Gertrude. "I think, perhaps, we ought to look at home before making any such suggestions! We have become accustomed to the comforts of Woolgreaves, and we—at least I—should be uncommonly sorry to give them up!"

"Well, but we have some claim to them; at all events we are of uncle's blood, and did not come here designedly, with a view to establish ourselves here, as I'm certain this woman did! And when you talk of our not giving up our present life—look to it!"

"Look, Maud! what do you mean?"

"What do I mean! That we shall have to change our lives very quickly! You don't suppose Marian Ashurst is going to live her life with us as constant reminders to her of what was? You don't suppose that we—that I, at least, am going to waste my life with her as my rock ahead—not I, indeed!"

"Well, Maud," said Gertrude, quietly, "I don't suppose anything about anything! I never do. What you propose I shall agree to, and that's all I know or all I care for!"

It was Marian's wish that the marriage should be delayed for some little time, but Mr. Creswell was of the opposite advice, and thought it would be better to have the ceremony as soon as possible. "Life is very short, Marian," he said, "and I am too old to think of deferring my happiness. I am looking to you as my wife to brighten and soothe the rest of my days, and I am selfish enough to grudge every one of them until you are in that position! It is all very well for young people to have their term of courtship and engagement, and all the rest of it, but you are going to throw yourself away on an old man, dear one," and he smiled fondly and patted her cheek, "and you must be content to dispense with that, and come to him at once!"

"Content is not the word to express my feelings and wishes in the matter!" said Marian; "only I thought that — after

Tom's death, so soon I mean—people might say that it would have been better to have waited till——"

"My dearest child, no waiting would restore my poor boy to me; and I look to you to fill the void in my heart which his loss has made! As for people talking, I have lived too long, child, to pay the slightest heed to what they say! If such gossip moved me one jot, it would rather strengthen my wish to hasten our marriage, as it supplies me with an argument which you evidently have not perceived——"

"And that is?——"

"And that is, that, you may depend upon it, these sticklers for the proprieties and conventionalities, these worshippers of Mrs. Grundy, will be very much interested in our movements, and highly scandalised if, under these fresh circumstances which they have just learned, you remain an inmate of my house! What has been perfectly right and decorous for the last few months would be highly improper for the next few weeks, according to their miserable doctrine! I should not have named this to you, Marian, had not the conversation taken this turn; nor even then, had you been a silly girl and likely to be influenced by such nonsense. However much you might wish to go away and live elsewhere until our marriage, you cannot. Your mother's state of health precludes any possibility of her removal, and therefore the only thing for us to do is to get the marriage over as quickly as possible, and thus effectually silence Mrs. Grundy's disciples!"

"Very well!" said Marian. "I suppose for the same reason it will be better that the wedding should be here?"

"Here? Why, my dearest Marian, where would you wish it to be?"

"Oh, I should like us to go away to some quiet little place where we were neither of us known, and just walk into the church——"

"And just smuggle through the ceremony and slip away, so that no one should see you were marrying a man old enough to be your father! Is that it, pet? I ought to feel highly complimented, and——"

"Please, not even in joke! No, no; you know what I mean. I cannot explain it, but——"

"I know exactly, darling, but we can't help it. If you wish it the wedding shall be perfectly quiet, only just ourselves, but it must take place here, and I don't surpose our good neighbours would let it pass off without some demonstration of their regard, whatever we might say to them! By the way, I mentioned it to the girls this morning!"

"And what did they say?" Marian asked, with, for her, rather unusual eagerness. "Or rather, what did Maud say, for Gertrude, of course, merely echoed her sister?"

"Poor Gerty!" said Mr. Creswell, smiling; "hitherto she has not displayed much originality. Oh, Maud was very affectionate indeed, came over and kissed me, and wished me all happiness. And, as you say, of course, Gertrude did, and said, ditto! Have they—have they said anything to you?"

"Not a word! I have scarcely seen them since yesterday."

"Ah! they'll take an opportunity of coming to you. I know they are delighted at anything which they think will conduce to my happiness!"

"Perhaps they don't think that your marrying me will have that effect?" said Marian, with a half smile.

"'Please, not even in joke!' it is my turn to say that now!" said Mr. Creswell.

It was a perfect godsend to the people of Helmingham, this news, and coming so soon too—a few months interval was comparatively nothing in the village—after the excitement caused by young Tom's death. They had never had the remotest idea that Mr. Creswell would ever take to himself a second wife; they had long since given up the idea of speculating upon Marian Ashurst's marriage prospects, and the announcement was almost too much for them to comprehend. Generally, the feeling was one of satisfaction, for the old schoolmaster and Mrs. Ashurst had both been popular in the village, and there had been much commiseration, expressed with more warmth and honesty than good taste, when it was murmured that the widow and Marian would have to give up housekeeping—an overwhelming degradation in the Helmingham mind—and go into lodgings. A little alloy might have existed, in the fact that no new element would be brought into their society, no stranger making her first appearance as the "squire's lady," to be stared at on her first Sunday in church, and discussed and talked over, after her first round of visits. But this disappointment was made up to Mrs. Croke, and Mrs. Whicher, and others of their set, by the triumph and vindication of their own perspicuity and appreciation of character.

They appealed to each other, and to a sympathising audience round a tea-table specially spread, directly authentic confirmation of the news of the intended marriage was received, whether they had not always said that, "That girl's heart was set on money!" That it would take some one "wi' pounds an' pounds!" to win her, and they had proved right, and she were now going to be made mistress of Woolgreaves, eh? Money enough there, as Mrs. Whicher told Mrs. M'Shaw, to satisfy even her longing for riches. "But it's not all goold that glitters," said the thrifty housewife; "and it's not all sunshine even then. There's givin' up liberty, and such like, to who? It 'minds me of the story of a man as cam' to market wi' a cart-load o' cheeses and grindstones. The cheeses was that beautiful that every one wanted they, but no one bought the grindstones; so seein' this the man, who were from where your husband comes from, Mrs. M'Shaw, the north, he said, he wouldn't sell 'ere a cheese unless they bought a grindstone at the same time, and so he cleared off the lot! I'm thinkin' that wi' Marian Ashurst the money's the cheese, but she can't take that wi'out the old man, the grindstone!" Scarcely anything was said about the singularity of the circumstance that a pretty girl like Marian had not had any lovers. Mrs. Croke remarked that once she thought there would be "something between" Marian and "that young Joyce," but she was promptly put down; Mrs. Whicher observing, scornfully, that a girl with Marian's notions of money wasn't likely to have "taken up wi' an usher;" and Mrs. Baker, little Sam's mother, declaring it would have been an awful thing, if true, as she was given to understand that young Joyce had "leff' for a soldier," and the last thing heard of him was that he had actually 'listed.

The wedding-day arrived, to Marian's intense relief. She had been haunted by an odd feeling that Walter Joyce might even come to see her, or, at all events, might write to her, either to induce her to change her resolution or to upbraid her with her perfidy. But he had made no sign, and there was no chance of his doing so now. She was perfectly calm and composed, had steadily contemplated her future, and had made up her mind as to her intended disposal of various persons so soon as she commenced her new path in life. That would not be just yet; they were going away for a fortnight to the seaside, Mrs. Ashurst being left to the care of the girls, who were delighted at the charge. Maud and Gertrude were to be bridesmaids, and no one else was to be officially present at the ceremony save Dr. Osborne, who, as Marian's oldest friend, was to give her away. The little doctor was in the greatest delight at the match, which he looked upon as being somewhat of his own making, though he thought it the best joke in the world to rally Marian by telling her that "her housekeeper project was a much better one than his! He had only thought Mrs. Ashurst might succeed Mrs. Caddy, for a little time, but by George! little Marian all the time intended to make herself head of the house for life!" The villagers, however, were not to be baulked of their ceremonial, the bells were rung, general holiday was made, and Marian Creswell, leaning on her husband's arm, walked from the church on flowers strewn on the path, by the girls who a few years before had been her schoolfellows.

"What an incongruous time for such a letter to arrive!" said Mr. Creswell to Marian, as they were waiting for the carriage to drive to the railway, handing her a paper. She took it, and read:

"Dear Sir,—General E. will be about six weeks hence. Please be prepared. We calculate on you for B.

"Yours truly,

"J. Gould."

"I can't understand it," said Marian. "Who is General E., and where will he be about six weeks hence? Why are you to be prepared, and what is B. that they calculate on you for?"

"General E.," said Mr. Creswell, laughing, "is the general election, and B. is Brocksopp, for which borough I've promised to stand. However, there's enough of that now! My darling, I hope you will never regret this day!"

"I am certain I shall not!" she replied, quite calmly.

ROBERT KEELEY.

"There is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors—your pleasant fellows particularly—subjected to and suffering the common lot; their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene; their actions to be amenable to poetic justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities."

So wrote the peerless English essayist, Charles Lamb, of one of the most original and quaint, as stage records tell us, of English low

comedians, Dodd. The feeling expressed in those lines comes home to us in connexion with the admirable actor whom we have lately lost, with a touching appropriateness. And the appropriateness is increased by the marked resemblance that must have existed between the peculiarities of Dodd and the peculiarities of Keeley. "In expressing slowness of apprehension" (says Charles Lamb) "this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling, than it took to cover the expression of his broad moony face, over all its quarters, with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and, for lack of fuel, go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder."

There is a world of imaginativeness, of course, in this charming piece of descriptive writing. Dodd himself would, perhaps, have been somewhat astonished to hear that he could convey all this with a look, and that his countenance was as full of meaning as Lord Burleigh's nod. But, due allowance made for Lamb's style, we detect in this passage a piece of thoughtful and appreciative criticism, so vivid, that to those to whom Elia's essays are familiar (as they should be to all lovers of pure English), the fortunate actor whom he commemorates seems a living reality. To see Keeley act, especially in the part of Sir Andrew Aguecheek—it was to Dodd's performance of that character that Charles Lamb in his essay specially alluded—was to create, in fancy, an irresistible association with this criticism, and to feel that what was written of Dodd might have been written of the actor of our time. Who does not confess how infinitely more telling wit is, when the speaker's face seems all unconscious of the humour of his words? There is an infection of pleasantness, no doubt, in the man who laughs heartily at his own fun; but he always gives us an impression of being like the child who writes under the efforts of his early art, "This is a horse;" "This is a dog," in order that there may be no mistake about them. "This is a joke—laugh at it." The grave humorist, who is a perpetual puzzle—leaving us never able to make out whether he is in fun or earnest—may have less universal power to please; but over those whom he does please, his power is much greater. The quietness and subtlety of Keeley might have prevented him from being such a favourite as he was, with the many, but for the personal peculiarities which, in his case, supplied the breadth of effect that was absent from his delicate acting. The quaint figure in its diminutive rotundity, and the "expansion of the broad moony face," were irresistible in their suggestiveness of fun, even when the actor was gravest.

Dodd's face, it is easy to gather from Elia's description, must have been a triumph of gravity. Indeed, we are told, in the same essay, that he wore, in private life, a countenance "full of thought and carefulness." Lamb meets Dodd, for some months retired from the stage, strolling in the Temple-gardens, and judges him, "from his grave air and deportment, to be one of the old Benchers of the Inn." On closer inspection, he detects his mistake. "Was this the face," he says—"manly, sober, intelligent—which I had so often despised, made mocks at, made merry with? The remembrance of the freedoms which I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon. I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury." This gravity of face and bearing which distinguished Dodd among the "pleasant fellows" of his time was the inheritance of Keeley, just as the infectious spirits and sprightliness of Bannister were revived in Harley.

Low comedy is no limited sphere; it ranges over many and various degrees of art and acting, from the comedy of Touchstone and Dogberry, to the broad humour or no-humour of modern farce. Through all these various degrees, Keeley was equally admirable. Harley was an excellent artist in his way; but he was always full of his own humour, and showed it, as much as to say, "See how funny I am!" His audiences were willing enough to admit that he was, and indeed who could help it? but Keeley's was the truer art. In their respective performances of Dogberry, the difference was remarkable. The blunders of the old constable fell from Harley's lips as if he felt their absurdity, and enjoyed it; from Keeley's, with the most immovable and pompous stolidity, as from one who believed that the whole weight of Messina was on his shoulders, and that he was well worthy to bear it, and well able to bear it. If anybody had told the one Dogberry that he was a funny fellow, tempted thereto by the merry twinkle in his eye, he would have been treated to a glass of liquor at the nearest wine-shop; if he had so far forgotten himself as to offer such an insult to the dignity of the other, he would have been incontinently "moved on," or comprehended as a vagrom man of the most dangerous sort. No doubt in some characters, Harley's face and style, expressing mirthfulness in activity, gave him an advantage; as in Launcelot Gobbo, who is eminently a "wag," or believes himself one, and of whom it may be true that the total want of point betrayed by many of his utterances was intentional—a satirical comment on the funny man who, because he is very amusing sometimes, "will always be flouting," and often fails in being anything but silly. But the majority of Shakespeare's "clowns" are unconscious or saddened humorists; and their jokes are far more in keeping with the grave face than the gay. Sometimes we meet with two of them placed side by side

in sharp contrast; and that contrast can never have been better realised than by Keeley and Harley in the same play: as when the former played Sir Andrew to the Clown of the latter, in that very comedy of Twelfth Night, about which Charles Lamb gossips so delightfully. The contrast was even more effectively shown in Sheridan's Rivals, when Harley was the Acres, and Keeley the David. His more ambitious successors of the present day would scarcely submit to the degradation of playing David, to the Acres of a fellow-comedian of even equal standing in the salary-list of their theatre, however much nature may have fitted them for the one part, and unfitted them for the other. Keeley knew better; and what a delicious David he was! Though forced by the false, though most attractive art which inspired that school of comedy, to talk in a succession of epigrams, as rounded and brilliant as the wittiest fashionable of them all, Keeley made David a miracle of stolid rusticity: a man of one idea, very much in earnest, both in his disgust with his master's follies and in his anxiety for him—which in Keeley's hands acquired a touch of pathos from the devotion of the man.

For Keeley was a master of pathos in his way, and many of our most delightful memories of him are connected with characters into which, by a few words or a little touch, he threw a certain homely tenderness quite his own. He never strained that chord too far, but struck it, as it were, in passing, relying upon delicate ears to catch the sound as it fell. By the general public, perhaps, this power of his was not as fully recognised as it might have been. Poor Robson could make his audience laugh and cry alternately, at his will; and that he could do so was due to what was really an artistic defect in his acting. He was an actor of genius; but of subtlety he had little or none. He did not hint himself to his audience; he threw himself broadly at them; and he could bound at once, without preparation or gradation, from pathos to fun. Not so Keeley; subtle his acting was, in the highest degree; and his light and shade were most delicately and beautifully blended. He must have suffered sometimes, from the misplaced laughter of gods and groundlings (stalls not always excepted), at moments when his own eyes were filled with tears. For he was too sensitive an artist not to feel, when his part gave scope for feeling. All audiences, however, contain some delicate perception; and it is not only by critics and constant playgoers, that Keeley is remembered as among the most touching, as well as the drollest, of actors.

Of the personal regard of the public, he had an extraordinary share. One great difference between French and English audiences is, that the former have the higher feeling for the art, the latter for the artist. The noisy "receptions" which a favourite actor obtains with us, whenever he appears on the stage, are sometimes rather excessive in their demonstration; but they are very infectious, withal, in their enthusiasm, and are, doubtless, most inspiriting to the performer. At a French theatre, an actor, however established his reputation and great his popularity, often has no "reception;" the tribute is confined to special occasions, as when he appears in some part which he has "created." It is the part, as it were, that is applauded in advance, and not the artist. There is something pleasant in the personal affection of a British audience, who make no such nice distinctions. Of that personal regard which unites us with our theatrical favourites, Keeley had a lion's share, and it followed him in his retirement so faithfully, that when the town heard of his death the other day, it regretted him as much as if he had left the world and the stage together.

In one sense, indeed, he did so: for though it was to all intents and purposes certain for some time past that he would never act again, he took no formal farewell of the theatre—a device, which is painful when it is real, as too rude and material a severing of the link between actor and public; but which of late years has been too often a fiction, a prelude to a succession of "last appearances" which provoke laughter and extinguish regret. We have no drawbacks of that nature on our recollections of Keeley; and we have still the consolation of hoping that his other half, the partner of his name and popularity—so closely united with him that we can never think of the one without the other—may not be entirely lost to the stage. We saw Keeley act on the occasion which proved to be his last appearance, when he played his old part of Dolly Spanker: one of the most finished figures in his portrait gallery. The little trot across the stage—the "Here I am, Gay"—the grotesque devotion and not unmanly weakness of the doting husband—made up a picture whose colours time had not in the least blurred or faded when he played for the last time. The stage was as elastic under his feet as it ever was in his best days; and he never allowed us to feel that he had outstayed his time. Ah! The laudatores temporis acti have reason on their side when they talk of the theatrical companies of old days, if there were many like him!

We do not profess in this little paper to attempt anything like an exhaustive criticism on Keeley's acting, or, indeed, anything that can properly be called criticism. Our purpose does not extend beyond a few words of admiring remembrance and regret: a momentary lingering on lost intellectual delights. We have mentioned his Dogberry. As we write, we hear again the very inflexions of his voice, and see again the wonderful expression of his face, at the supreme moment when he was called an Ass! No other catastrophe on earth, or in the waters under it, could have aroused in living man such an amazing exposition of stupendous astonishment, indignation, and incredulity, as that insult wrung from Dogberry as Keeley drew him. But his Verges was even finer. By the force

of his profound belief in Dogberry, one may say that he absorbed that Jackass into himself, sublimated and enhanced the drollery of the character, and made it all his own. The more preposterous Dogberry, the more steeped and lost in admiration he. When Dogberry was most ridiculous, Verges wandered away through the broadest realms of speculation, how the Heavens ever came to make a man so wondrous wise. It was a true triumph of Art. Considered with a reference to the very few words set down for Verges, it was certainly the most finished and thoughtful piece of suggestive comic acting that one can easily imagine possible. And it culminated when his asinine chief patted him on the head, and he first bent under the honour, and then became the taller for it, gazing into his patron's face with an expression of fatuous contentment perfectly marvellous.

In the melodrama of The Sergeant's Wife, where he and Mrs. Keeley played two innocent fellow-servants in a murdering household, most delightfully, his terrors were of the very finest order of acting. We can see him now, when the principal murderer, his master, patted him on the head, and praised him for a good lad, sinking and sinking under the bloodstained hand until the hand stopped, finding nothing to touch. In the Loan of a Lover, his Peter Spyk had no approach to a parallel that ever we have seen, on the English, French, or Italian stage. Its immovable stolidity, and apparent insensibility to everything but a big pipe, until he made the tender discovery that he loved the little woman who had grown up about him from a child —and its pathos when that truth burst upon him concurrently with the information that she was going to be married to some one else—were simply beyond praise. For the richest humour, his reading of a letter in Betsy Baker may be quoted; or his extraordinary devices for getting out of the room, in Your Life's in Danger, where he had to pass a man at breakfast who he thought might stop him by the way. Foremost among the pleasantest laughing faces we have ever seen at a Theatre, is our recollection of the Queen's face and its natural unrestrained abandonment to the humour of the scene, when, in A Thumping Legacy—at Drury Lane in Mr. Macready's time years ago — Keeley received the intelligence that he had come to Corsica not so much to inherit a property as to inherit a Vendetta, and, in supreme vexation of spirit, suddenly and surprisingly hit out at his informant after the British manner. There was once an unsuccessful piece at the Lyceum, founded on a charming tale by Washington Irving. We do not recal a single point in Keeley's part, except that he *had seen a ghost before the curtain rose*. That he had indubitably seen it, and that he went about ever afterwards expecting to see it again, the audience knew as well as he did from the moment of his first entrance.

We are not thankful enough to great actors for the relief they give us, and the good they do us. These are but a few untwined Forget-me-Nots scattered on a great actor's grave. In private, he had the heart of a child, and the integrity of the noblest man.

WEAVER, WIT, AND POET.

A HOTLY contested election in a large city was just concluded, and the candidate of whose committee I had been an active member, had been returned at the head of the poll by a very splendid majority of more than a thousand ahead of his opponent. I was alone in the committee-room, and in the very best of tempers, when there walked in, unannounced, and very much the worse for liquor, a person, whom in these columns I will take the liberty of calling Mr. Donaldson. He was a man of about fifty years of age, unwashed, unkempt, and, as regards attire, in a state of "looped and windowed raggedness," that was distressing to behold. And more pitiable even than his physical plight was, his moral degradation. I knew well who he was, and what he wanted; and though (as I said before) I was in very good humour with myself and all the world, as one is apt to be in the hour of success, I determined that I would not comply with Mr. Donaldson's demand. It was, as I anticipated, a request for money—for the small sum of five shillings—which, to do Mr. Donaldson justice, I must say he had very fairly earned. Mr. Donaldson had been a journeyman weaver—had a taste for reading and writing—was a man of great natural ability—had become a journalist, after a humble fashion—had published a volume of poems, which were neither very good nor very bad—and was a capital hand at epigrammatic squibs, both in prose and verse. In the composition of these, which our committee had published in the press and upon the walls of our city, he had done good service to the victorious candidate. He had received many sums of five and ten shillings during the progress of the election, and had spent them in drink. Had he been sober when he presented himself before me, he would, as a matter of course, have received his five shillings and a little good advice: which, not being a matter of course, it is more than probable he would not have taken. But as he was so painfully drunk, I resolved that I would not, that day, add fuel to the flame that was consuming him. I made him understand this, as peremptorily as I could, but as he was not savagely but only maudlin drunk, he was more aggrieved than offended at my Rhadamantine rigour, and appealed to my mercy rather than to my justice. But I was obdurate, and made him understand—though not without considerable difficulty—that if he would return in the morning, perfectly sober, "clothed, and in his right mind," he should have ten shillings instead of five, and the prospect of earning something more on account of the election. It was a long parley, and a very difficult victory to win; but I won it, partly by threats, partly by entreaties, and partly, I suppose, by the electrical influence of a strong will over a weak

one. The fact was, I knew and had heard so much good of this poor man, that I greatly desired not only an opportunity to do him a real service, but to hear from his own lips, when he was sober, the story of his life, his struggles, his temptations, and his hopes—if he had any.

He came the next morning at eight o'clock, according to appointment, ragged as usual, but with clean hands and face, and a light in his clear blue eyes, that seemed to show that the fumes of liquor in his brain were very volatile, and passed away quicker than is common with most people. I asked him if he were ready for a walk of a dozen miles, to a town to which we might easily have gone by rail had it suited my fancy. He expressed himself in the affirmative, though he said he should first of all like to have his breakfast. This I provided for him, not in money but in kind, for fear of accidents. The day was lovely, neither too hot nor too cold, and when, after twenty minutes' walk, we got clear of the streets, the beauty of the autumnal tints upon the trees, the greenness of the grass, the transparent blueness of the cloudless sky, the warmth of the sunshine, and the joyous freshness of the breeze, seemed to affect my ragged companion as I know they affected me, with a sense of physical enjoyment, and of gratitude to Heaven for the blessed gift of life. I soon engaged him in a conversation which gradually assumed, on his part, an autobiographical shape—the very shape that pleased me most—and told me the story of his life from his youth upwards. He was the son of a poor weaver in the West of Scotland, and was put to work at his father's trade at the tender age of eight years. Before that time he had learned to read at a little school kept by an old woman in the village, and being naturally quick, he had already stored his infant mind with fairy legends, stories of adventure, and snatches of verse. The hours of labour, at that time, in factory work were from six in the morning until eight in the evening, with two intervals for meals, half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. The overseer of the factory seeing the child engaged in reading during the dinner hour, and being surprised, on questioning him, to find the eager desire of knowledge that had taken possession of him, not only allowed him an additional couple of hours every day to attend a school, without making any deduction from his wages, but very generously paid for his schooling. By the time he was fifteen years of age, he had obtained considerable proficiency in English composition, a competent acquaintance with the rules of arithmetic, had studied Greek, Roman, and English history, together with geography, and knew something—but not much—of Latin. He also began to revel in the writings of Robert Burns, and to awake to the consciousness that he, too, vehemently desired to become a poet. Like Burns, too, his first rhymes welled from his heart in admiration of the beauty of a young girl in his own sphere of life. Precocious in his physical as well as in his mental powers, he fell desperately in love before he was sixteen, and before he was seventeen, he was married to the girl of his first choice—like himself, a mill-worker. Between them both they earned about fourteen shillings a week, and on this slender pittance they commenced the hard battle of the world. The young man, as he grew older, discovered that he was a wit and a politician as well as a weaver and a poet, and at the time of the first Reform agitation he took the Radical side, and let off in the local newspapers of the neighbouring city, a series of squibs and crackers against the boroughmongers, as they were called, which excited much attention, and led to many inquiries for the author. He, on his part, was by no means unwilling to declare himself, and to receive such homage and pay as his effusions commanded—the homage considerable, the pay very scanty. Unthinking people, surprised to find such talents in a poor weaver, patronised him in their good-natured but blundering way; brought him into the society of his betters—better only in point of worldly position—and invited him to their convivial whisky parties.

"Many a time," said he, "when I would have been better pleased with a shilling in hard cash, I have drunk, at other people's expense, five shillings' worth of wine and whisky, and have been brought out, I feel it now, in the strength of my intellect, my form, and my sense of wit and humour, to make sport for these brainless but good-hearted Philistines, who enjoyed my conversation, and had very little of their own. I must own that I liked this kind of thing. I felt a sense of power and supremacy. I was a Triton among the minnows. My appetite grew by what it fed on. I knew myself to be the intellectual superior of the people who plied me with liquor to get the wit out of me, yet I did not despise them, or shun their society. On the contrary, I felt ill at ease with myself and with the world, if by an accident, I were not invited to any of their social 'cracks.' Off and on, I led this kind of life—being still a mill-hand, and gaining an occasional guinea for a poem—save the mark! when one of my comrades, the managing clerk in a lawyer's office, gave me the opportunity of an introduction to the editor of a liberal paper in the city, by bringing him to one of our symposia. He appeared to be as pleased with me as I was with him, and offered me a situation on his paper, partly as a collector of local news and paragraphs, and partly as a corrector of proofs, in which art and mystery I soon became tolerably expert. This was a great rise in the world for me, for I had a salary of two guineas a week (more than double the joint earnings of myself and wife), and I was thus enabled to take her out of the mill, and give her freedom to attend to the children. I was twenty-one years old at this time, and had three children, and the prospect of a fourth. But my old love of good-fellowship, and my power of repartee, and the knack of saying things that were either good in themselves, or that seemed good to those who heard them, especially when spiced with a little savagery or cynicism—which I never really felt in my

heart—proved my bane, to a far greater extent than in my humbler sphere as a weaver.

"For a time all went on smoothly enough, and I might have done well, had I been ordinarily prudent, and had not the twin devils of conceit and the love of flattery taken possession of me, to a degree that made me imagine I was one of the greatest wits and geniuses in the world, and that some of the good fellows, whose evenings I made so pleasant, would sometime or other find the means of advancing my fortunes. I am old enough—and sad enough now—to know that a man is his own best friend, if not his only one; and that he who expects others to help him forward in the great life-battle, while he himself does nothing, is as big a fool as was ever suffered to crawl upon the earth. But I was full of hope at that time, and had not discovered mankind to be that 'unco squad' which Robert Burns described. I was out so much at nights, and so late during my newspaper engagements—sometimes on business, oftener for pleasure—such pleasure as illimitable whisky toddy could supply—that my wife began to grieve and pine, and make things very disagreeable at home. This ought to have cured me of my unfortunate habits, but it did not—the more's the pity!—and afforded me, in my perversity of mind, an additional excuse for persistence in wrong-doing. It is an old story, too, and a sad one; and I need not repeat too much of it. Late hours and debaucheries too frequent, the one or the other, affected by degrees my capacity for work. I gave dissatisfaction at the office, and ultimately, I must say after many efforts on the part of my employer to bring me back into the ways of sobriety and regularity, I lost my situation.

"The blow for a while was stunning. But I plucked up heart. I had no idea of going back to the mill, even if I could have been taken on again. I felt that I was a journalist, and something better than a weaver; and a journalist I resolved to remain. But I saw no chance of advancement in this career at home, and as for London, which I once thought of attempting, I gave up the idea of it, and resolved to try my fortune in the United States. A little subscription was got up for me, sufficient to pay my passage to New York in a sailing packet—there were no steamboats on the Atlantic at that time—and to leave my wife as much as would maintain her for three months, even if she did not, as she said she would, go back to the mill. I was full of hope and courage, and resolved to send for her as soon as I could turn round in the New World. I had great ideas of my future. Andrew Jackson, whose Irish mother had once kept an apple-stall at a street corner in Limerick or Dublin, I forget which, was President of the United States, and if he, born so low, could rise so high, could not I rise in that land of liberty above my present mean estate, and be a little more of a somebody than I could ever hope to be at home? We had bad weather going out, and the voyage lasted seventy-one days, during all which time I had neither the means, nor the opportunity, for indulgence in liquor. I had not been a week in New York before I found that I had made a great mistake as regards the chances of employment in that city; and I trudged away on foot to Philadelphia. Here also I found that I was out of my element, and discovered that America was not exactly the place for such as I, who was not a farmer, a farm-labourer, or a lusty mechanic, who was not able to clear a farm on the outskirts of civilisation, and fight with the bears and Red Indians. I was disappointed and sick at heart. No doubt I was a poor fool, and a coward as well. A countryman from the West of Scotland, whom I met in Philadelphia, helped me on a bit, and tried to get me a newspaper engagement. But I knew nothing of American politics, and did not care to learn; and became, I scarcely know how, or by what gradations, a mere loafer, living from hand to mouth, from hour to hour, as it were, on chances that were scarcely better for me than for the birds, or the stray dogs that prowled about the streets. I was long in this condition, brightened up now and then by my temporary friend and permanent foe, the whisky bottle, which was provided for me in the company of a few of my countrymen, who liked my society, and were glad to drink with any one who had recently arrived from the 'dear old country,' as they called it, and who loved to sing Auld Lang Syne, and Willie brewed a Peck o' Maut, and other songs that recalled Scotland to their memory.

"I had written home the news of my bad fortune, and after a while, at the instigation of my wife, a letter was sent to me from my old friend the lawyer's clerk, to say that another newspaper engagement, about as good as the last, but on another journal, awaited me, if I thought it advisable to return, and would notify the fact immediately. I was but too willing. The home-sickness was strong upon me. My Philadelphian friends subscribed money enough to pay my passage across the Atlantic, and gave me a little purse in hand, and a parting supper, which I remember to this day as one of the happiest incidents in my weary life. 'The mirth and fun grew fast and furious,' as we toasted Scotland and her worthies, and above all, 'the immortal memory of Robert Burns,' whose equal in genius on this occasion I fully believed myself to be—a belief, I think, that was shared by several of the company. The passage home was pleasanter than the voyage out, and occupied but nineteen days. I often thought, as I paced the deck, and I sometimes think the same now, that I ought, with my generous ideas—my love of company and conversation, and my conviviality of nature, to have been born to a good estate, and thus been enabled to dispense hospitality to high and low. I should have made a tolerably good country squire, and devoted my mornings to my books, my garden, or my farm, and my evenings to the company of good fellows. But with my tastes and predilections I was a mere waif and stray, a floating straw upon the river of life, and by no means the big ship that I thought myself.

"On my return home, after a happy meeting

with my family, I received the appointment that had been promised me, and resolved to work hard, and walk warily for the remainder of my days; to put the drag upon the wheel, or stop the coach of conviviality altogether. I kept my resolution indifferently well for six or seven years, and in addition to the current routine of my newspaper duties, threw off songs, ballads, and epigrams almost as freely as the clouds throw out the rain drops, and got as little for my drops as the clouds for theirs. I published a volume of them, which did not so greatly take the taste of the public, as to pay the expense of printing, and I at one time thought I should have had to go to jail, for the debt I had contracted for this unlucky venture. I got over it, somehow; though the thing was like a millstone round my neck for a longer time than I can now remember. I think it was the unsuccess of the unlucky book—I made a bonfire one night of three or four hundred unsold copies of it, determined that they should not go to the trunk-makers—that drove me for comfort to the whisky again. I took it as a medicine for the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick, and found it successful.

Wi' tippenny we'll fear nae evil,
Wi' usquebae we'll face the devil.

Such was my experience, as it has been that of thousands of others—and as long and as often as I was in the mood for it, I never had far to look to find companions to treat me, as in an earlier time—to laugh at my sallies of wit, if wit it was, and to applaud the lightest utterances of the rollicking humour that possessed me, after the third or fourth tumbler. For ten years I have been in this plight. I have knocked at death's door and not been admitted. I have slept in barns and outhouses. I have been in the hospital, and I have been in the lunatic asylum; and I am, as you now see me, a poor wreck of a man, one whom it is impossible to save, even if he were worth the salvage. My wife left me long ago; but is still alive. I dare not go to see her. My children are all grown up and able to take care of themselves—which is more than I can do. And yet I think I was made for better things. I feel some spark of divinity within me, that whisky has not quenched, and that I might have been a good man, if I had had a strong will to govern me in my early days, and train me properly. But I never had any guidance except the gratification of my own will; and cannot say with Robert Burns that the light that led astray was light from Heaven. No, it was light from Hell. You ask me if I have any hopes or plans for the future? Frankly, I have none. My mind—or what is left of it—is as purposeless as the wandering wind. It cannot fix itself to anything; and it is a wonder to me, if what I have said in our walk, has been consistent and coherent. I think, however, if I like anything, that I should like to get out of the city and all its ways, and live wholly in the country. It is my present idea—I don't know how long it will last—that I could take the part of assistant gardener, if there were not much digging to do, for my back is weaker than my mind, and stooping pains me. But light work, pruning, training, weeding, and pottering about, as I might say, just to give me a pursuit, or the semblance of a pursuit, takes my fancy for the moment; and possibly, God knows! might make me respectable for the remainder of my days." "And your wife?" I interposed. "Well, poor woman, she thinks me incorrigible and irreclaimable. Perhaps I am, but I hope not; and could I exorcise the whisky demon out of me, it is very likely she would come back to me. Women are better than men, all the world over, suffer more, love more, and are worth more."

Mr. Donaldson would not sit down with me to dinner in the inn at which we halted. "I am too proud to sit down with you," he said; "too proud to afford the waiters an opportunity to stare at you and think you eccentric, or out of your mind, for consorting with such a ragged, rascally-looking vagabond as I am. Give me the means to get a dinner by myself, and I give you my honour I will spend it on dinner, and return to you as fresh and liquorless as I am now." I trusted him, and he kept his word; and we walked back to the great city in due time, when he received his stipulated guerdon for his loss of time; and made a solemn promise to call upon me that day week, sober. He kept his word in this instance also. Meanwhile, I had spoken about him to our friend the member for the city—interested him in Donaldson's talents, character, and prospects, and procured for him the post he coveted of assistant-gardener in the honourable gentleman's domain. He had light work—a little pleasant cottage to live in—and humble, but sufficient, wages. His wife rejoined him; and for six months, perhaps the happiest of his life, he lived amid the trees and flowers, and did not get drunk above once a fortnight. But the end was at hand. His constitution was shattered. The flame of life burned low in the socket, and he went off suddenly without a sign or a groan. Peace to his memory! He was an acorn that had the capacity for becoming an oak-tree if circumstances had favoured; but he fell into evil places, and rotted into barrenness; or, if the simile be more appropriate, he was found by a swine—the swine of Intemperance that consumed and destroyed him.

FACTS AND FANCIES.

THROWING STONES IN THE SEA.

We sat on the shore at Shanklin,
Howard, and Smith, and I;
Smith was smoking, I was thinking,
Howard was idling by.
He took a stone and tossed it
Carelessly into the sea;
And then another, again another,
And sometimes two or three.

"What are you doing, Howard?"
"I'm losing my money again,—
This little pebble's a thousand
I dropped in that scheme in Spain.

This is a larger venture
That in the Fisheries sank,
And this is more than I like to tell—
Swallowed in Dodge's Bank.

"*This* is a newspaper, vanished,
With thrice a thousand at least;
And *this* is a project, fair to study,
For making champagne from yeast.
This is a stone—pray, watch it;
Ten thousand fully told,
For converting old shoes to sugar,
And turning flint to gold!"

And still he kept throwing, throwing
The stones into the sea.
"Howard! your losses grieve you!"
"The devil a bit," quoth he;
"But if I don't grow wiser
Next time that Cash runs riot,
I'll either drown or hang myself
To keep my guineas quiet."

IN THE HONEYMOON.

"Oh world! I've tried thee and I tire;
Thy pleasures are but future pain:
Though much is good that we desire—
Nothing is good that we attain!"

My love looked o'er my shoulder—
Inquisitive beholder,
As thus I wrote and thought,
And said, "False rhymer, over free,
Is this your verdict upon *me*,
Despised as soon as caught?"

Lovers, ye know the answer due!
But quick as thought, her fingers flew
O'er cheeks and ears like bolt from quiver,
And slew the kiss I meant to give her.

THOSE CONVENT BELLES.

THERE is an old-fashioned expression, "our wits jumped together," to denote that two persons, without previous concert, arrived at the same conclusion. It is astonishing how people's wits, although separated by time and place, will, under like circumstances, jump together. On our table there has been lying, not unread, a book called "Le Couvent; Mémoires d'une Religieuse," "Memoirs of a Nun, by Sister X." We leave the candid reader to judge whether anybody else's wits have lately been jumping in accordance with the authoress's.

Her story, though not short, is simple. Under the influence of religious excitement, she felt it her duty to leave her parents, and quit domestic, for conventual life. Once caged, her friends were further estranged from her by silence and concealments which were not her fault. Then grim death passed that way, and rendered regrets and remorse equally unavailing. The charm of enthusiasm and novelty was broken before very long; but the irrevocable step having been taken, nothing remained but bitter repentance. Her superiors were not slow to discover the change, nor to mete out its punishment without stint or mercy. In such cases, both parties' minds become envenomed; compromise and reconciliation are scarcely possible. Persecution followed persecution; until the refractory nun, to escape incarceration in a dungeon, cut the Gordian knot (instead of trying, like poor Miss Saurin, to untie it) by scaling her prison walls, and running away.

Sister X. repudiates, at the outset of her narrative, any hostility to the Papal religion. She has nothing to say either against the celibacy of the clergy, or monastic vows. What she would proclaim on the housetops is, that multitudes of young girls are caught by deceitful promises, of a happiness unattainable on earth. She would tell them that conventual life has its suffering, its weariness, its regret, its persecution, its bitterness. She would have everybody know the abuse there made of moral force, in default of material force.

We may be told, over and over again, that nuns are no longer constrained by violence. True; abbesses no longer have their dungeons as a right; official condemnations are out of fashion; but does not moral compulsion still exist? What is to become of a poor girl, whose dower has been swallowed by the ever-gaping gulf of monastic poverty? In vain will they say, as to a prisoner who has completed his term, "Go; you are free; the doors are open." Go whither? When a justly-offended and undervalued family have banished you from their thoughts; when you have not a rag to cover you, nor a farthing to buy a morsel of bread, and when ruined health is your only patrimony, where can you go? Sister X. requires that every person who has become tired of a cloistered life, and who brought a dower to the establishment, should have a right, on retiring from it, to at least a portion of that dower. It seems to us that Sister X.'s wits have not, in this matter, jumped alone.

Sister X. accuses nunneries of being too much given to intrigue, indiscreet curiosity, worldly frequentations, and, above all, to an inordinate greed of gain. In convents, as throughout the rest of the world, with and for money almost everything can be done. It strangely unsettles the balance of justice. "A rich postulant! A noble postulant! What a deal of good we might do with her money! What dust we might throw in people's eyes with her name!" Whilst vulgar postulants are kept to the

strict observance of rules, the privileged candidate is petted and caressed. No sacrifice is too great to keep her. The rules are relaxed; caprices are tolerated; eyes are closed to defects of temper.

Some time after her profession, Sister X., while travelling with two elderly nuns, feigned to be overcome with sleep; and indeed it was difficult to hear their insipid talk without yawning. Believing her really asleep, they soon gave their conversation another turn.

"Can you comprehend, ma sœur," asked one of them, "why they allowed such a person as Mademoiselle de Boys-Crespin to profess? A girl who would never be obedient nor mortify the flesh, but lay in bed without being ill, and out of pure whim? She addressed the superiors haughtily and free-and-easily; she kept herself to herself, and even her confessor could make nothing of her."

"I know all about that, ma sœur," replied the other; "more than anybody else. For my sins, I suppose, I had Sister de Boys-Crespin for three whole months in the laundry with me. I wonder she did not drive me crazy. Sometimes she upset the novices' discipline by larking—what the world calls larking; sometimes she was so ill-humoured and sulky that nobody dared go near her. One day I gave her some kitchen cloths to iron; she almost threw them in my face. Another time, when silence was to be kept, she took it into her head to hum a profane song, an opera tune; I gently requested her to hold her tongue. All I got for answer was, 'You won't let me sing? Eh bien! I will dance instead!' And off she went, amongst the tables, jumping and skipping, putting herself into postures and giving herself airs—really, ma sœur, she made me blush. The other novices laughed till they cried. That evening, a general penance was inflicted. But Sister de Boys-Crespin went to bed; she had a headache."

"I should like to know, then, what made them keep such a girl as that?"

"No doubt, ma sœur, 'tis a very sad case; but I have heard both Madame Clarisse and Madame Hilarie say that our house was greatly in need of her dower. She was very rich. They talked of three hundred thousand francs in ready cash, and of a château, a real château, that would come to her at her father's death. They were obliged to manage carefully and have plenty of patience and perseverance, to get her to make her profession at all. At every instant, the mothers superior were afraid she was going to slip through their fingers."

"Three hundred thousand francs; oh, ma sœur!" replied the other nun. "Three hundred thousand francs and a château! That's something indeed! I can now understand the reverend mothers' indulgence; with the exception of Madame de Gronier, I think, we have never caught such a dower as that."

"I fancy not, ma sœur."

And thus, by pretending to be asleep, Sister X. discovered the secret of the complaisance with which Mademoiselle de Boys-Crespin had been treated. It draws from her the remark, that the convents of the last century crumbled under the weight of vice and sensual gratification; but that those of the present, faithful mirrors of the epoch, will sink beneath the guilt of ill-gotten wealth.

Before very long, a change of house was ordered, but not for the benefit of her health. According to the usage of the congregation, she was not informed where she was going until just before she stepped into the diligence, and even then she was neither told the importance of the establishment nor the name of its superior. A lay sister went with her as travelling companion, police-woman, and spy. At a certain town, a young infantry officer got up into the coupé, making the third passenger, and filling it. Although she had assumed what they call in the convent "the livery of the world," that is to say, a lay costume, to travel in, the lay sister's black dress, their reserved behaviour and their monastic manners betrayed them as religious obeying orders. Once settled in his seat, the officer tried to make himself agreeable. His eyes sought to penetrate her thick black veil; he addressed her in a few kind and pleasant words. His voice reminded her of times gone by. She answered by pointing to her breviary. Bitter thoughts oppressed her heart; the father she had disobeyed and estranged, the lover she had sacrificed, the miserable existence she had led ever since she gave her confidence to that false wretch, the Curé of Saint Marceau! The burden was too heavy to bear without tottering. Horrified by the retrospect, she burst into tears. The lay sister tried hard to make her stifle her grief.

"What is the meaning of this despair?" asked the officer, interposing. "Are you suffering, madame, under compulsion? Are they conducting you anywhere against your

will? If you require the assistance of a man of honour, you have only to say the word, and I am ready to protect you."

Instead of answering, Sister X. was choked by her emotion. Her nervous system, which had been pitilessly and incessantly tried, was now for the moment so completely unstrung, that she could no more cease sobbing, than she could cease to breathe.

As the officer continued to press his inquiries, the lay sister replied that her companion was ill; that she was taking her to a milder climate for the benefit of her health; and that she had long been subject to attacks of this kind. At Bar-le-Duc the officer left them; but, before getting out of the coupé, he renewed his offers of assistance. Sister X. had sufficiently recovered herself to thank him, and to say that she was going where they were taking her to, completely of her own accord. The young man hesitated, and regarded the follower with mistrustful looks; his countenance expressed what was passing in his mind, and made a strong impression on the victim. The instant before he left the diligence, he whispered to her his name and address, and then said aloud, "If you want any help, you may reckon upon me."

The lay sister was all eyes and ears.

The first thing she did, after their arrival, was to give the mother superior, one Madame Ludivine, a garbled account of this adventure. According to her, Sister X. had acted a part in order to attract the officer's attention; she ran the risk of causing a horrible scandal; it was possible the gentleman might be an old acquaintance; they seemed to understand each other; perhaps he joined them with the intention of carrying her off, and so forth.

Madame Ludivine, on Sister X.'s presenting herself, questioned her in a coarse and offensive style, quite different to the custom of the congregation, in which, if there is no cordiality, the forms of politeness and good society are at least observed. The offender frankly avowed the impression that family recollections had made upon her.

"You are not a true religious, ma sœur," harshly replied the superioress, "if, after three years' profession, you cannot command your feelings better. It is deplorable weakness! Try and make a thorough reform in your conduct; and remember that you have no right to think of anything else, except the Bon Dieu and the fulfilment of your duties. Go; you will make your beginning here with three days' penitence."

Sister X. knelt, in humble submission to the rebuke. It seems that she did not bow her head sufficiently. "Lower than that," said the mother, pushing it down with her hand. "Lower than that. Where do you come from? Is that the way you have been used to make genuflexions?"

"Good God!" thought the sister, "what is to become of me? If this is the beginning, what will be the end?"

Notwithstanding her confusion, she had time to cast a glance both on the "superioress" herself and the eccentric luxury of her reception-room. It required no effort of imagination to recognise the grande dame, the wealthy heiress, under the habit of the recluse. That same evening she learnt that the young mother superior, so disdainful and proud, was no other than Mlle. de Boys-Crespin, in religion Madame Ludivine. Her fortune and family fully explained her rapid advancement in conventual dignities. Although scarcely five-and-twenty, she had been a superioress for the last two years.

In this establishment, she reigned like a queen, delighting in the homage of her little court. In person, she was above the middle height, very mundane in style and manner. She took great care of her motherly self; her linen was of the finest and of snowy whiteness. The poor sister who had to get it up, received more scoldings than compliments. The stuff for her religious habit was said to be made expressly for her. But the perfection of her dress could not cover the plainness of her face. Madame Ludivine was blonde, or rather red-haired; and her low flat forehead was overgrown by tresses, rebellious to every kind of water and pomade. Pale blue eyes with no speculation in them, a broken nose too short originally, and an ill-cut mouth, made a whole that was far from attractive. Nevertheless, at first sight, her ugliness did not produce its full impression. She had a beautifully white skin, magnificent teeth, and a ready smile, when she chose. Her voice was soft and insinuating with equals and favourites, although abrupt and imperious when addressing inferiors, or those of the sisterhood not admitted to her intimacy.

Madame's apartments scarcely accorded with our notions about the lodging of a virgin, wholly devoted to God. Her salon was charming, furnished with taste and whim. You would say that she had tried to revive the type of the worldly abbesses of the last century. In temper she was

not changed since she flung the kitchen rags in Sister Celeste's face. Her gaiety and her ill-humour were equally annoying; her sarcasms were even worse than her rebuffs: she indulged in them without respect to persons. The very bishop who had appointed her was obliged to submit to her raillery.

One of her usual butts was poor Father Augustin, the almoner of the convent; a worthy man some fifty years of age, of limited intelligence, and with a face as vulgar as his manners. In consequence of his love for the table, he had grown as big and as round as a tub. Madame Ludivine advised him to apply for a dispensation from fast days, for the sake of his health. She pampered his appetite with delicate dishes, and whatever she knew he liked the best; and then when he joined the sisterhood, at "recreation," with a purple face and snorting like a fatted ox, she burst out laughing, ran to meet him, inquired how he did, whether his digestion was good, entering into childish and almost improper details. Father Augustin fell in with her pleasantries, though they might sometimes prick deeper than the skin; but how was it possible for him—a mere peasant with a little of the mud rubbed off—to quarrel with a Superieure who sat such capital dinners before him? Madame Ludivine's convent had a wealthy neighbour, named M. de Blassac, who was suffering from an incurable disease, and never went beyond his garden, where they dragged him about in an invalid chair. He had formerly been secretary to an embassy, lived in grand style, keeping three men-servants besides a gardener. He was a bachelor, a stranger to the town, and had no relations. At irregular intervals he was visited by a young German, who appeared to be his only acquaintance. Those who best knew his affairs, said he was worth a million—absolutely a million of francs! Madame Ludivine had great hopes of inheriting this wealth, or at least getting a handsome legacy. The least he could do, was to leave the community his mansion and gardens, abutting on its walls. It was rumoured that he had promised them to Madame Ludivine; and she, like the milkmaid in the story, had already disposed of them in her own mind; on part, she would extend the convent buildings; the other part would sell for a hundred thousand francs.

During her predecessor's time, there had been friendly intercourse between the invalid and the convent. The knowing ones (and the veil covers as many as any other headdress does), would have it that he and the former superioress were old acquaintances who met here "by accident." She gave him permission to attend mass at their chapel, and for that purpose had allowed him to open a door upon a sort of neutral ground between the two properties. Madame Ludivine knew better than to withdraw the privilege.

An old man reputed so rich, with only servants about him, was necessarily run after by legacy hunters. If, on one side, his garden was contiguous to the convent, on the other it joined a "Seminary" for candidates for the priesthood. A third competitor, the founder of a new religious corporation, patronised by Mademoiselle Jeannette, Monsieur's housekeeper, made his way without fuss, and received for his share, in presents of money, more than the two rival houses put together. Probably, the old diplomatist was amused by the jealousies, which broke the monotony of his retirement. While he did not discourage the agents of the Seminary, he liberally and secretly assisted the other, whom, with a smile, he called, "that poor devil of an Abbé;" at the same time he courteously accepted the attentions of "those worthy sisters," repaying them with promises and the produce of his garden which he did not want himself.

Madame Ludivine paid him frequent visits. He appeared enchanted with her company. He praised her intelligence and the zeal she displayed in the interests of her house. After their customary game at chess, he made her show him her architect's plans. He examined them carefully, approved or found fault, suggested improvements; and when she observed, with a heavy sigh, "All this will cost a deal of money!" he would reply, "Allons! allons! ma bonne mère. Have you no faith in Providence? Hope for the best. Your work is a holy one."

At last Madame Ludivine's visits were so frequent and long that she thought fit to justify them to the chapter. She explained that she expected him to be a benefactor to the house, but that her chief anxiety was to procure him the happiness of a holy death. Shortly afterwards, in her presence, M. de Blassac formally handed a sealed paper to his notary, saying at the same time, "This is what I intend for those saintly women." As the notary had received nothing of the kind for anybody else, Madame Ludivine believed herself the sole legatee.

In spite of her demonstrations of affection, in spite of her cajolery and fond ex-

pressions (she often called him her Petit Papa), she must have thought he was in no hurry to die. Her proud temper suffered from the contact with his servants, and the terms of equality to which she was obliged to admit them, and she confessed to her confidants that her mind would not be completely easy until after the opening of the will. Every now and then she tried to extract ready money from him. One day she even urged upon him the pretended sale of his mansion in favour of the convent, in order, she said, to avoid any lawsuit that might be brought against them. "It is not a bad idea," he replied, with his habitual smile; "but what, my dear, would be the use of it? You know I have no family belonging to me?" The careless way in which the words were spoken completely reassured Madame Ludivine's fears.

He soon declined rapidly; nevertheless he still attended mass in his wheel-chair, dressed in a full suit of black, and drawn by a livery servant. A big diamond sparkled on his white cravat, and numerous "decorations" adorned his buttonhole. His complexion was of the colour and texture of parchment, his cheeks were hollow, his iron-grey hair was carefully arranged and perfumed. A long aquiline nose made thinner by suffering, pale thin lips on which a vague smile was stereotyped, and bright hazel eyes deep-set beneath shaggy eyebrows, gave to his countenance a subdued expression of cunning and mockery. They wheeled him into the choir, affectionately attended by the sisters; one handed him a prayer-book, another supplied him with a charcoal foot-warmer.

At last he died. Father Augustin, Madame Ludivine, the sisters attached to the infirmary and the sacristy, never left him. Scarcely had he closed his eyes before Madame Ludivine gave herself the airs of an heiress, acting as if she were the mistress of the house. The servants, especially Mademoiselle Jeanette, let her have her own way, and laughed in their sleeves. The German stranger (reputed to be M. de Blassac's natural son), the occasional visitor, soon arrived. He was armed with a will in every respect correct, but dated several years ago. He also considered himself master there, and his meeting with the religious lady was curious to behold. He seemed just a little upset when they informed him that M. de Blassac had confided a more recent will to his notary.

The opening of this "will" was a scene for a dramatist. Madame Ludivine was present, assisted by the steward and the legal adviser of the convent. On the packet was inscribed, "Not to be opened till after my death." Every neck was outstretched, every ear attentive. After the first envelope, they came to a second, and then to a third. The stranger maintained his German phlegm, Madame Ludivine strove to imitate him. Finally, inside several sheets of paper curiously folded one over the other, the notary, who gravely performed the ceremony, found a pen-and-ink drawing, done on card-paper. It represented a cat and a rat playing chess together; and beneath in the diplomatist's well-known handwriting, was the device:

A Bon Chat, Bon Rat.

Which, interpreted, is "Tit for Tat," or "The Biter Bit."

All those who had no interest in the matter gave way to laughter. The German never moved a muscle, but took up the drawing and examined it, as if to appreciate its merits. Madame Ludivine, unable to control herself, screamed, "Oh, the wretch!" and fell fainting into the steward's arms.

We give here, by preference, a comic passage, though there are plenty that border on tragedy to be found in the Memoirs of *this* Religieuse. In vol. xiii. of our late Series, p. 7, will be found Monastic Mysteries, from the revelations of Enrichetta Caracciola, an Italian escaped, and afterwards married, nun. The Chronique of Louvain, in Belgium, has recently related a case of sequestration at a convent near that town. The victim is a nun belonging to one of the best families in the neighbourhood, and whom the lady superior had placed in a damp, underground cell. She had been several days in confinement, when, from the narrow opening by which her prison received a little light from the garden, she succeeded in attracting the attention of a man working there, and who, at her entreaties, consented to procure for her writing materials, and to convey a letter to her brother-in-law. He, on receiving the communication, proceeded to the convent, and asked to see his sister-in-law, but was informed that she was in religious retirement, and could not be seen. He returned three hours later, accompanied by a commissary of police, whom he left outside, and then repeated his demand. He received a similar reply; but on his insisting, the superior at length became embarrassed. He then opened the door to the police officer, who compelled the directress to accompany them to the cellars underground: where they found not only the lady in question,

but also five other nuns confined in like manner, all of whom, on recovering their liberty, took advantage of the commissary's presence to quit the establishment and return to their friends. The case is to come before the courts of law.

What strikes one in all these instances, and now, unfortunately, in like events in England, is that, in four different countries, widely diverse in all their circumstances—in Italy, France, Belgium, Great Britain—the respective stories run almost parallel to each other. Convents are the same, wherever established; convent life may change its climate, but never its animus. There is the same capitation, the same interruption and stifling of family affections, the same growing dislike between certain members of the community, the same persecution, at first petty, then diabolical; the same tension of the cord, the same final snapping thereof, either by escape or expulsion—which become scandalous—or by oubliettes and other means of "forgetting" and suppressing, which we may guess at, without deserving the reproach of wicked inventiveness.

When infatuated persons are weak enough to believe that they may merit heaven by making earth hell, we pity them heartily and sincerely; but we feel something stronger than pity for those, whose term of life on earth is made a hell *by others*, under the pretext of insuring their entrance to heaven. Self-inflicted torment we can regard with compassion; the tormentors of enthusiastic girls and broken-hearted women, we ought firmly to suppress, if possible. True, the oppressors would have no power but for the fault or the error of the victims, who place themselves in their hands. But high-flown young women, we hope, will now reflect whether the tyranny they are likely to meet with in the world, be not preferable to the mercies of a Reverend Mother Brownrigg; and whether, after all, it be wise to risk the leap out of a secular frying-pan into a religious fire.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

BODMIN TO PADSTOW.

And now the crow, turning away from civilisation, strikes across the stormy Bodmin moors, where the ghost of the Cornish wizard Tregeagle bides his doom, expiates his crime, and is tormented by the relentless master whom he served so well. His favourite haunt is a small Dead Sea, called Dozmare Pool, a little tarn, eight hundred and ninety feet above the sea, not far from Brown Willie and the old tin workings on the Fowey. Wicked Tregeagle was a dishonest steward of Lord Robartes, at Landhydrock, where a room in the house is still called, Tregeagle's. This Sir Giles Overreach of the Carolan times cheated the tenants, destroyed papers, forged deeds, and sold land not his own. He amassed money enough to purchase the estate of Trevorder, in St. Breock. Certain it is, he murdered a sister, an angel who stood between him and his prey, and his miserable wife and children also fell victims to his pitiless cruelty. When death came to strike the monster, who trembled at his approach, Tregeagle heaped gold on the priests to sing, and pray, and save him from his certain doom. Their exorcisms succeeded, he died, and they laid him at rest in St. Breock church. But the devil was still watching—a law-suit arose at Bodmin about some lands, the title deeds of which Tregeagle had destroyed.

The case was argued over and over; trial after trial, and yet no result. At last even lawyers' expedients were exhausted. A final decision was to be given. Everything turned on the validity of a certain deed. The counsel for the defence was in despair. The judge was about to sum up. The court was hushed, when the minister of St. Breward entered, leading the corpse of Tregeagle. There was a shudder of horror when counsel, pale, but still brazen, commenced an exhaustive cross-examination of the unjust steward. The result proved a system of complicated fraud, of which the honest defendant had been the victim, and the trembling jury gave a unanimous and speedy verdict in his favour.

Now came the difficulty about laying the ghost of the dreadful witness. He kept following the defendant everywhere, and rendering his newly-gained property a burden to him. The lawyers and priests at last united their cunning, and devised a plan. They would set Tregeagle a purgatorial task, during which he might slowly repent, and during the performance of which he was safe from the Devil's claws. He should drain Dozmare, a tidal and bottomless pool. Drain it moreover, proposed a sly curate, with a limpet shell with a hole in it. He worked hard in that desolate place, and on stormy winter nights was heard howling at the hopelessness of his eternal task. The storms and lightnings tried to drive him from his labour, and then, if he rested for a moment, he was chased by the Devil and all his hounds to the Roche Rocks, where he obtained respite by ramming his head through the east window of St. Michael's chapel, where hermit lepers once dwelt.

For some reason not quite decided, Tregeagle got tired of Dozmare Pool, and was then sent to the north coast, near Padstow, to make trusses and ropes of sand. The moment he had packed and twisted them, the breakers came and rolled them level. Daughters of the Danaides! it was positively unbearable. The inhabitants of Padstow, maddened by his howlings, sent for St. Petrock to remove the monster to anywhere on the southern coast, out of hearing.

St. Petrock deposited his encumbrance on

Bareppa, and sentenced him to carry sacks of sand across the estuary of the Looe, and to empty them at Porthleaven, till the beach was entirely cleared as far as the rocks. Artful St. Petrock had observed that the sweep of the tide was from Trewavas Head towards the Lizard, and that every day's wave would roll back the sand. Long did poor Tregeagle labour, but all in vain; and at last his loud howlings began to seriously disturb the fishermen of Porthleaven. A mischievous goblin at last brought them relief. One night when the giant, laden with an enormous sack of sand, was wading across the mouth of the estuary, the goblin, out of pure malice, tripped up Tregeagle. The sea was lashed by a storm at the time, and, as the steward fell, the contents of his sack were poured out across the arm of the sea, and formed a bar which at once destroyed the commerce of Helston (Ellas' town).

Anger and weapons were useless; so, by bell, book, and candle, the priest again put chains on the wayward and tormented spirit, and transported him to the Land's End. His task this time was more tremendous than ever. He was condemned to sweep all the sands from Porthcurnow Cove round the great granite headland of Tol-Peden Penwith into Nanjisal Cove. There is one thing against him, and that is the strong sweep of the Gulf Stream; but he perseveres. Those sighing sounds, heard before the sou'-west gales, are said to be his moanings, when he knows the tempest is coming, to scatter the sand he has with such cruel toil collected.

Another version of the great Cornish legend, an amalgam of many centuries of myths, represents Tregeagle, when exorcised by the priest's magic circle, changing into a black bull, at first furious at the prayers, but gradually growing quiet as a lamb. He was at last sent to Genvor Cove, and sentenced to make trusses of sand and carry them up to Escol's Cliff. Many winters Tregeagle toiled at this unsatisfactory business, till he suddenly thought of bringing water from an adjacent stream and freezing the sand. This he did, and finishing his job, went back to the defendant in the Bodmin trial, and would have torn him in pieces had he not had a child in his arms. But over innocent children spirits have no power. The impracticable Tregeagle was then sentenced to the same task, minus all fresh water. In one legend Tregeagle is made lord of a castle which stood by Dozmare Pool, the Bodmin moors being his hunting forests. Enchantment has removed the castle, and turned the oak trees into granite blocks. Near St. Roche there is a granite pillar twelve feet high, which is called Tregeagle's staff. Tregeagle, one night crossing the Daporth hills, lost his hat, and running to get it, flung away his staff to lighten him in his search. The hat, a great disk of granite, remained on a neighbouring hill till 1798, when some soldiers camping there, fancying it to be the cause of the constant rain that tormented them, hurled it down into the sea.

And now the crow will take a bold flight seaward, far from the ceaseless mists that float over the Bodmin moors and the vaporous rains that beat on the Four-hole Cross, and the desert heath of Temple Moor, into King Arthur's country. At Tintagel-by-the-Sea he was born, and at Slaughter Bridge, close by, he fell with all his knights beside him. This Arthur, who owes everything to Alfred—not King Alfred, but Alfred Tennyson—is divisible into two parts: the fabulous Arthur and the semi-fabulous Arthur of semi-fabulous history. He was probably really a British chief of the sixth century. He is said to have defeated the Saxons in twelve battles, at last to have been wounded to death in a battle at Camelford, and then to have been conveyed by sea to Glastonbury, where he died and was buried. In the romances he is made to conquer Scotland, Ireland, Iceland, Norway, and Gaul. Geoffery of Monmouth tells the story of Arthur from Armorican sources, and a romance about him was one of the earliest books printed by Caxton. Leland says that near Camelford, where Arthur's last battle was fought, pieces of armour, rings, and brass furniture for horses, were still sometimes dug up at Slaughter Bridge, where ages ago

> All day long the noise of battle roll'd
> Among the mountains by the winter sea,
> Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
> Had fallen in Lyonness about their lord.

Across the stream of the Camel in a valley near Boscastle, not far from the sea, there is a bridge of flat stones upon uprights. The tradition is that this stream ran crimson on the fatal day when Arthur slew Mordred, his traitorous nephew, at this spot, having previously, in front of where Worthyvale House now stands, received a wound from Mordred's poisoned sword. An engraved stone over the stream is said to still mark the exact spot. The Cornish tradition is that Arthur was transformed into a red-legged chough, and it is therefore still thought unlucky to kill one of these birds.

There is a tradition that the Danes once landed at Genvor Cove. Alarm fires instantly spread from Carn Brea to St. Agnes beacon, and from the Great Stone to Cadbarrow, and from Cadbarrow to Brown Willie. King Arthur, then at Tintagel, feasting with nine other kings, instantly marched to the Land's End, and smote the red-haired Danes so terribly, that only those escaped who had charge of the ships. The mill of Vellan Druchar was that day worked with blood. The ships, too, were cast on shore, and left so high among the rocks by an extraordinary spring tide, that for years the birds built in the rigging. After the battle, at which Merlin was present, Arthur and his nine kings pledged each other in holy water from St. Sennan's well. They returned thanks for their victory in St. Sennan's chapel, and finally dined together on the Table Rock. The old name for the Land's End was The Headland of Blood, and Bollait, a place near, is The Field of Slaughter.

Tintagel, Arthur's old palace by the sea, is certainly one of the most romantic spots in England. It stands on a desolate precipice of slate rock, which seems rent by an earthquake into two parts, the sea having undermined it. Half the castle stands on the mainland and half on the isolated rock, where the citadel and chapel are. Many of the walls have fallen, those that remain are shattered and ruinous. Leland describes it as having been "a marvellous strong and noble fortress," almost impregnable, and on a high and terrible crag, with a drawbridge crossing the chasm.

The old landing place Porthleaven, the "Iron Gate" at the foot of the promontory, is supposed to be British work of great antiquity. Tintagel is Tennyson's "many-towered Camelot," where the wise and brave king once held court, with gentle Gawain, Launcelot the champion of the lake, and generous Sir Tristram. Fuller calls the son of Pendragon "the British Hercules." This Tintagel, "the impregnable fortress," the stronghold of the princes of Cornwall, is frequently mentioned in old romances. It was supposed to become invisible twice in every year. "Dunchine," the castle of the Cleft, is mentioned in Doomsday Book. When the Earls of Cornwall held it, Earl Richard, the son of King John, entertained here his nephew David, Prince of Wales. It next became a crown prison. In 1385 a lord mayor of London was sent here for a contumacious mayoralty; but in Elizabeth's reign the grave Burleigh shook his head at the cost of the repairs, and allowed the sea and storm at last to conquer. A curse seems on the place now; no lichens spot the stones, no ivy grows over them; there they stand, bare as the sea-vexed rocks below. The cliffs here are hung with samphire. The people of Bossiney believe that Arthur still haunts these ruined battlements, in the shape of a chough or a raven. Cervantes mentions this superstition in his Don Quixote. "Have you not read in the famous exploits of King Arthur, of whom there goes an old tradition that this king did not die, but that by magic art he was turned into a raven, and that in process of time he shall reign again, and recover his kingdom and sceptre, for which reason it cannot be proved that from that time to this any Englishman has killed a raven?" The name of Arthur's discreditable queen, Guinivere, is still common in Cornwall under the disguised form of "Jennifer."

Strange to think, that perhaps, where those cushions of sea pinks that cover the top of the citadel cliff now grow, Arthur and his knights once trod. Wild sea birds scream where the harpers once sang the praises of their king. The glory and the praise are gone; no words of love or courage are heard now, only the sound of the mournful waves; as Sir Bedivere said:

> The whole Round Table is dissolved,
> Which was an image of the mighty world,
> And the days darken round me and the years,
> Among new men, strange faces, other minds.

The crow has a fair westward flight before him now along the wild north Cornish coast, where the granite cliffs are reddened as if with the blood of seamen that have been so often hurled against them by the cruel sea, and left to perish at their base. Every village along this storm-swept coast, this churchyard of sailors, has its own strange legend of vapoury phantom ships, of fairy dances round old cromlechs on the moors, of saints' miracles, of daring smugglers and the caverns they haunted, of mermaids and their love for the sons of men, of giants and their wars, of King Arthur and his knights, of wreckers and their savagery, of witches and their cantrips, of old churches, and the consecrated bells that rejoice and sorrow within their crumbling salt-corroded towers.

Forrabury (Bottreaux) church, that stands on the cliff above Boscastle, a town situated in a little seaside ravine, like a small Balaclava, has a fine legend, which the Rev. Mr. Hawker, the Cornish poet, has immortalised. The tower has no bells. From the silent tower of Bottreaux, says Mr. Wilkie Collins, no chimes have ever sounded for a marriage, no knell has ever been heard for a funeral. The reason for the silence is this. Centuries ago the Forrabury people resolved to have a peal of bells which should rival those at Tintagel, which rang merrily at the marriage, and tolled mournfully at the death of King Arthur. The bells were cast, blessed with cross and sigil, and while still warm from the foundry, shipped for Forrabury. The bark had a halcyon journey with its blessed burden, and was soon in sight of the slate rocks of Bottreaux. As the vesper bell sounded from Tintagel, the pious pilot crossed himself, and knelt to thank God for the safe and prosperous voyage. The mocking captain sneered on his piety. "Thank God?" said he; "forsooth, thank my hand at the helm; thank the good ship and the stout canvas; thank me at sea, and thank the saints when at home." The pilot reproved him, but in vain. The vessel was already approaching the harbour, the people of Forrabury stood on the cliffs hailing the white sails every moment looming larger. All at once a supernatural wave rolled mountains high towards the vessel; it sank before it without a struggle. The impious captain and the cursing crew all perished, the pious pilot alone was saved. And now, when a storm is brooding, and the sea grows troubled with a mighty anger, the bells of Forrabury are still heard deep below the waves, tolling for the dead. From that day to this the tower of Bottreaux has remained silent.

In a valley running up from the sea near Boscastle stands the ancient mossy church of Minster, overlooking a dell of old oak trees. The tower of this church was pulled down centuries ago. The local legend has it, that the monks of old time used to place a light in one of the windows of the tower, to guide belated worshippers at night to their altar. Whether the monks had a special horror of wreckers, we know not, but certain it is that

sailors and fishermen, looking up the gorge of Boscastle, frequently mistook this tower by day for a landmark, by night for a beacon. Wrecks sometimes happened, and when they did happen, the monks regretfully shared the bales, chests, and kegs, and prayed for the dead men's souls, with special fervour. This occurred, however, so frequently that the tower at last got an ill name as a lure to a dangerous port, and one day a band of angry wrecked men marched on the abbey, and in spite of the monks' prayers, pulled down the tower, some carved stones of which, green with damp, are still to be found hidden under the long rank grass of the churchyard.

Further west the crow comes to Padstow (Petrock's tower), a high-flavoured old fishing town a mile from the sea. Athelstan, when he conquered Cornwall and Scilly, and pricked the Britons back westward with his Saxon sword, gave the place his name, but it never adhered, and the Britons soon fell back on their favourite, Saint Petrock. Padstow must have been a place of some importance in the middle ages, for, when Liverpool was still unborn, this little Cornish sea-port sent two high-sterned turreted vessels, to aid Edward the Third and his knights at the siege of Calais. It first declined in the reign of Henry the Eighth, when the harbour began to block, and that Dunbar, now so dangerous, to form, against which shoal vessels, hurrying in for shelter to the *only* place of refuge on that terrible northern coast of Cornwall, are often driven by eddies that surge inside the point of the Camel estuary. These sands, rich in carbonate of lime (eighty per cent), are in consequence so invaluable as manure, that nearly one hundred thousand tons a year are carted away, so wisely has industry converted the sailors' burial-place into a mine of wealth. The east shore of the estuary, a barren waste of rolling sand hills, gives a wildness to Padstow in fine blue sky weather, but in dull grey days the "towans" glow with a delusive appearance of changeless sunshine —with such enchantments can imagination invest even a desert. The devastating sand cast down here, as if from all the hour-glasses Time has ever shattered, has choked up and partly buried the ancient chapel of St. Enedoc (Sin Kennedy) situated under the east side of the barren eminence of Bray Hill, north of Padstow, and at the opposite side of the harbour. The sand, piled up to the roof, and scooped away to free the door, has made a small Cornish Pompeii of it. On the north-east side of this desert churchyard a corroded tombstone of 1687 (James the Second), rises from the yellow sea sand. This half buried church was built in 1430 (Henry the Sixth), to replace an ancient oratory of one of those self-devoted Welsh or Irish saints, who were the earliest missionaries among the Pagan tin-miners; traces of it were visible at Bray Hill, some fifty years ago, during a temporary shifting of the sand. St. Enedoc's shows nothing above the surface but a little crooked spire of slate stone blackened by the salt spray, and yellow with blotches of lichen. The old carved seats in the interior were worm-eaten centuries ago. Streaks of scarlet and gold still linger on the panels of the roof. The front is Norman, with a rude cable moulding. There is service once a fortnight in this wild place, where the sea choruses the anthem, and the wind howls its savage responses. Mrs. Candour, that indefatigable gossiping friend of Mrs. Grundy, says that some years ago, before the grass had chained down the volatile and restless sand, a certain clergyman, full of zeal to save his fees, was in the habit of descending into the pulpit through the opening of a skylight. The conquering sand of Padstow has been, however, generally strongly opposed to the establishment, for St. Michael's, on the western shore, between Wadebridge and St. Enedoc, has equally suffered; and on the opposite side of the estuary, near Trevose Head (half way between Hartland and St. Ives), the old church of St. Constantine has been almost entirely engulfed, and the old annual festival, with its limpet and star-gazy pies and hurling matches, has, therefore, for some years been discontinued. The local legend at Padstow is that the bar was the result of the curse of a mermaid, who was shot at whilst sporting in the sea by a devil-may-care young fellow who was looking for gulls. She cursed the town as she sank on her way to a submarine hospital. The old men still say, "A harbour of refuge here would be a great blessing, but nothing will keep the sand out or make the water deep enough to swim a frigate, unless the parsons find out the way to take up the mermaid's curse." St. Petrock's—the fine "late decorated" church of Padstow, with its slender pillars, its rich coloured windows, and strong timbered roofs, is built of grey Caraclew stone, but looks as cold and chilly as if it had been paralysed by the Atlantic storms. The old font, with the Twelve Apostles sentinelled round it, had once the miraculous power (according to the belief of the superstitious inhabitants of this wild country) of preserving all those who were baptised in it from painful experiences of the gallows.

The charm was broken and the saints' blessing lost for ever some fifty years or so ago, when a Padstow man, named Elliot, robbed the mail, and was duly hung. Honesty has since that been found to be a better security against peculiar complaints of the throat, than even St. Petrock's font.

In the old house of the Prideaux (1600)—on high wooded ground above Padstow, where once St. Petrock's monastery stood till the Danes burnt it in 981—there are numerous pictures of that clever self-taught Truro artist Opie, or Oppy, as he called himself. He painted all the Prideaux, male and female, all their servants, and even all the family cats. Opie, the son of a Truro carpenter, was discovered by Peter Pindar smearing out portraits with splashes of house paint. He came to London,

aided by Lord Bateman and Dr. Wolcot, in 1777, and helped to illustrate Boydell's Shakespeare. Fashion soon deserted him when it found the rough Cornish man did not flatter, so he took to historical painting, executed several broad vigorous works, and died in 1807. Family picture galleries are like Noah's Ark—they contain strangely contrasted couples; as, for instance, here—Dean Prideaux and the Duchess of Cleveland; Jupiter and Europa and the Madonna and Child.

MORE OF WILLS AND WILL MAKING.

JEMMY WOOD AND HIS WILL.

About thirty-three years ago there was still alive, in the city of Gloucester, a very singular Mr. Wood, who was regarded there with a mixture of pride, contempt, and derision. Though this gentleman was of good family, being of "the old Brockthorp stock," which must be accepted on local authority as a good one, he was keeping a poor shop, and kept it until the day of his death. Here he attended himself, and would supply any article in the chandler's way, from a mouse-trap to a ship's anchor. Not that he kept such articles in stock, but his name was so good, his credit so strong, that he would take an order for fitting out a ship, and complete it by ordering the supplies from other merchants. There was nothing to excite derision in such proceedings. But in one corner of the shop was a little dark office, where he himself sat, with two clerks, and did business. The name of this corner was the "Old Gloucester Bank," admitted to be the oldest private establishment of the kind in the kingdom, with perhaps the exception of Child's well-known house. This in itself was an oddity—the huckstering shop and bank combined. It was more remarkable still that in that corner had been built up a fortune, which was said to make its owner the richest commoner in England.

He was of course watched, and his proceedings noted and talked of. He used to exhibit the most characteristic trait that has yet been recorded of misers—taking a ride upon *a hearse*, on its return journey, to avoid coach hire. The grand speculation was, what would "old Jemmy Wood" do with his money? He had no relatives to speak of, beyond some second cousins; his two sisters were dead. Would he leave it to charities? Scarcely; for it was repeated with satisfaction how he had been used to quote his father's advice: "James, don't thee leave thy money to charity; it only makes so many rogues." An officious neighbour suggested an alms-house, adding, "it would immortalise him, and do good," but received for answer a pleasant chuckle, with rubbing of hands and the old speech, "Ay, ay, and make rogues." He was an alderman, but the stupid corporation would insult him when he came to their meetings, and play practical jokes on him. They were heavily in debt, and he had been heard to say he would do something for "poor old Gloucester;" but here they only acted according to the usual corporation lights. His ways were noted. It was remarked that every Sunday he devoted to a long and solitary walk. He was not what is technically called a miser, and did not pick up old hats in the street, or deny himself food. He would give nothing in charity. He would acknowledge no relations, but, with a common shape of pride, had taken a fancy to a gentleman of the same name, whose proceedings in connexion with the Queen's trial had attracted attention—namely, "Mr. Alderman Wood, M.P., of London." There was no relationship between them, but he no doubt chose to assume there was, and the tribe of local Woods were at times not a little disquieted by this partiality. A female relation of the miser's, although unknown to the alderman, had written to him in admiration of his behaviour in relation to the Queen. At her death she left him some property, and the alderman came down to attend her funeral. This lucky tribute of respect brought him the acquaintance of her kinsman, who conceived great admiration and respect for him, gave him a house at Hatherley rent free, and wrote to Lord John Russell begging the commission of the peace for "his esteemed friend." The local folks were more and more alarmed at this intimacy, and one disinterestedly warned him: "I understand Alderman Wood has been paying you great attention. I hope you won't be imposed upon;" on which the other winked and chuckled and rubbed his hands, to hint that he knew what he was about.

No one was watching him with greater interest than a certain artful solicitor of the name of Chadborn. This gentleman managed all his business for him, as the miser believed, on the most disinterested terms. Chadborn, he said, never charged him anything save costs out of pocket, but all the while the attorney was secretly registering attendances and services of all kinds.

Mr. Chadborn soon grew to have great influence. It was reported about that the old miser had said to tenants asking for long leases, "His Honour would take care of them." That "in good time all would come to His Honour;" and this strange title of respect, recalling Sir Giles's humour in the play, he seemed to roll out with satisfaction. His Honour, with great skill, too, instead of setting himself against Mr. Alderman Wood, prudently associated that functionary in his own interests.

At last, as old Jemmy Wood was now getting on towards eighty, efforts were made to get him to make a will, and it was soon known that this had been happily accomplished. One morning in April, Alderman Wood of London received a pressing letter from one of the clerks to the effect that the old man was poorly, could not dress himself, and begged of him to come down at once. The alderman flung himself into the mail, travelled all night, and arrived to find his friend down-stairs in his bank. But the end was at hand. Jemmy Wood was carried up in a chair to bed, and

died on the 20th of April. Chadborn arrived just in time, on that very day.

Then, indeed, curiosity and speculation were at their height. The town was on the tiptoe of expectation. But soon it was known that he had died leaving about a million in the stocks. An old bureau stood in the lobby, facing his room door, and from this was brought down a sealed envelope, which was solemnly opened in presence of the London alderman, Mr. Chadborn, and the two clerks. It was found to contain a will bequeathing all his property to these four gentlemen as executors, subject to debts and legacies. The former were little, and of the latter there were none. It gave them nearly a quarter of a million apiece. The fortunate alderman returned to London, and not an hour was lost in taking out probate. In fact, the proctor received instructions almost on the day of the decease. A kind of feeble caveat was entered, which was supported with such indecision that the probate was all but granted. It seemed to be put forward in the hope of something turning up. Long after, the judge stated that probate must have been granted, but for a mysterious occurrence.

One of the disappointed had been a Mr. Helps of Cheapside; and one morning in June the threepenny post brought him a letter and an enclosure. The letter was in pencil.

"The enclosed is a paper saved out of many burned by parties I could hang: they pretend it is not Wood's hand; many swear to it: they want to swindle me: let the rest know."

The enclosure was a piece of paper scorched at one corner, and torn right across the name signed to it. It ran:

"In a codicil to my will I give the corporation of Gloucester one hundred and forty thousand pounds. In this I wish my executors would give sixty thousand pounds to them for the same purpose as I have before named. I would also give to my friend Mr. Phillpotts fifty thousand pounds, to Mr. George Connell ten thousand pounds, to Mr. John Thomas Helps, Cheapside, London, thirty thousand pounds, to Mrs. Goodlake, mother of Mr. Surman, and to Thomas Wood, Smith-street, Chelsea, each twenty thousand pounds, and Samuel Wood fourteen thousand pounds, and the latter gentleman's family six thousand pounds; and I confirm all other bequests, and give the rest of my property to the executors for their own interest.

"James Wood.

"Gloucester City Old Bank,
July, 1835."

The recipient of this strange communication, which seemed thus to drop from the clouds, was a connexion of the deceased. It seemed almost too apropos—too much after the pattern of the finding of a lost paper in a melodrama. But it was at once placed in proper hands, and then business really began. The Court of Probate stayed its hand; real substantial claimants rushed to the front, and the decks were cleared for the fray. The fund would most probably have to furnish costs; so the best lawyers were engaged, and what was to be a five years' battle began.

Even with regard to the old will, some local rumours were beginning to get abroad. This instrument, when produced to the court, appeared to be a sort of compound document, consisting of two papers carefully wafered together. The first was instructions for a will, named the four executors, was in Chadborn's handwriting, and was duly signed by "Jemmy Wood." But there were no signatures of witnesses, so taken by itself it was worth nothing. The other paper was duly signed and attested, and gave all his property to his executors, subject to certain legacies and dispositions he should hereafter make. But the executors were not named. Thus each paper was deficient; the first wanted legal force, the second was "uncertain," as it *named* no one. Still each supplied the other's imperfection, and taken together they seemed to make a good will. The wafering together showed that such was the testator's intention.

But now it was said in Gloucester that only one paper had been put away in the bureau, and that when the will was produced, after the old man's death, there had been only a single sheet taken out of the bureau. To the amazement of the court the executors now admitted that such was the case, and Mr. Chadborn owned that he had gone home for the first paper, the "instructions," had wafered the two together, and placing them in the envelope, had sealed it up with Mr. Wood's own seal, which happened to be lying there "accidentally," he said. The envelope was then placed in the bureau.

Of this questionable transaction the four executors seemed to have all more or less knowledge. In their statement they declared what was the perfect truth, though not the whole truth—that the two papers when taken out of the envelope were together, which indeed they were, on the last occasion. In the two being *attached* together consisted the whole force of the will. Separate, even in two distinct drawers of the same bureau, and the executors lost their prize. It was too tempting.

Still it might be said this was a mere technical device; and as the intentions of the testator were manifest, it would be hard that they should be frustrated by an accident of this nature. Flesh and blood could hardly stand being defrauded of a million sterling, when a couple of wafers was all that was wanting to secure it, and when it was conceded that they, and no others, were the executors meant.

But the newly-found codicil pointed at some other matters. It spoke of a regular will, in which the Gloucester corporation received one hundred and forty thousand pounds, and which, taken with the second paper, made everything clear. But where was this will?

The fatuous corporation, who had made game of the testator during his life, and played their stupid jests on him, now became keenly alive to their own interests. A notice appeared

offering a substantial reward for news of it, with a reward to the sender of the codicil, if he came forward. Fresh stories, too, came up from Gloucester. It was rumoured that Mr. Chadborn and a companion had been seen, just after the death, busy tearing up and burning papers in the testator's room. This was duly charged, and, strange to say, admitted. They were unimportant papers—old lottery-tickets, &c. On being pressed, it was owned that one of these papers was a sort of power of attorney to Chadborn, which, as it was now useless, he thought it better to destroy.

Then the case began to drag itself slowly through the court. It exhibited some highly characteristic instances of human subtlety and nice reasoning. No less than six-and-thirty witnesses were brought forward for the executors, to prove his hatred of the corporation of Gloucester, and his dislike of charities. Nearly all these were shown the codicil, and were almost positive as to its being a forgery. Their reasons found a valuable commentary on the fallibility of such a test. He always wrote "exors" in a peculiar way; Mr. Counsel's name was spelled "Council;" and he had been heard again and again to caution clerks and others against writing amounts in figures, as they could be altered. Yet all these vast sums were in figures. But a little industry in searching his papers, showed precedents for all these points, spelling being one of his weak points, and "Lien in Hospital" being found in his handwriting for Lying-in Hospital. Such tests are fallacious, as assuming human nature to be consistent always; and as Lord Lyndhurst acutely remarked, a forger would have taken care to write the amounts in words, not in figures, knowing this peculiarity. Though here again an ingenious advocate might retort that a more clever forger still would refine on this, and would have written in figures, because it would be said that a forger *would* have taken care to know his peculiarity. An instance of the speciousness of human testimony arose in the case. A Mr. Smith declared that only a few years before, he had seen a will of Jemmy Wood's, in which he had left twenty thousand pounds to an hospital, on the strange condition that the money was not to be paid until the hospital was built. This seemed particular enough; the witness was very positive, and they seemed to be on the track of something. But a sort of letter-book turned up, in which this very will was found, in Smith's writing, but it was a will he had drawn for a Mr. Chetwynd.

It was curious that all the thirty-six witnesses should have such a strong opinion against the codicil. The supporters of the latter were lucky enough to find five-and-twenty to swear positively to the writing. They gave the usual reasons, a particular flourish here, a straight stroke there. They went through in regulation cross-examination. Look at that trembling down-stroke in the letter D, now look at this D— are the two alike?

At last, it came to decision before Sir Herbert Fust Jenner, who reviewed the whole case in what was called "an elaborate judgment." He went through all the evidence, and finally decided that he could not act upon the codicil, which had nothing to support it, and had come into being in too suspicious a manner. This decision of course affected no one, costs came out of the fund, and both parties must have appealed whatever way it had been decided. It was then taken to the Privy Council, and in 1841 Lord Lyndhurst gave what was no doubt the correct judgment, reversing that of the lower court, and thus diminishing the gains of the executors by about a quarter of a million. It was all but certain that a will had been destroyed. Most probably what had taken place was this. Chadborn returning home, and searching among his papers had found various codicils and wills, which had virtually reduced what was to come to the executors to some insignificant sum. These he found referred to each other, and were so connected that he could not destroy one without destroying all; on the other hand, by destroying them he destroyed the names of the executors, a loss he could only supply by the device of wafering on the old "instructions." The codicil he no doubt thought he had torn and burnt with the rest. Who saved that codicil? Who wrote that most dramatic note? Why did the writer conceal himself? What risk would he run by coming forward? Why was he not tempted by the handsome reward of the corporation? Had he no spirit of revenge if he had been defrauded of a legacy? Was it some spying servant, prowling about that irregular house when the ransacking and burning the papers was going on, and had he found it under the grate just scorched? Or was it some more important person in the drama, some one struck with alarm at the magnitude of the deed, or perhaps conscience stricken, and wishing to leave it to fortune to make reparation—but who dare not appear? *Was it Chadborn himself?*

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read on Thursday, April 8, and Friday, April 9, at Liverpool; Tuesdays, April 13, 27, May 11, and 25, St. James's Hall, London.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER X. THE GIRLS THEY LEFT BEHIND THEM.

It is a conventional, but by no means a correct, notion, that at the time of a social separation those who are left behind have so very much the worst of it. People imagine that those who remain must necessarily be so dull after the departure of their friends; though very frequently those departing are the very persons who have imported gloom and misery into the household, who have sat like social old men and women of the sea on the necks of the jovial Sindbads, who have been skeletons at the feast, and wet blankets, and bottle-stoppers, and kill-joys, and mirth-quenchers, and story-baulkers. It is by no means an uncommon occurrence, that there has been no such pleasant music for weeks, in the ears of those remaining in the house, as the noise of the wheels of the carriage speeding the parting guest.

The people of Helmingham village, when they saw the carriage containing Mr. Creswell and his bride spinning away to the station, after indulging in a fresh theme of talk expressive of their surprise at all that had happened, and their delight at the cleverness of the schoolmaster's daughter, who had, as they politely expressed it, "carried her pigs to such a good market," began to discuss the situation at Woolgreaves; and as it had been universally agreed that the day should be made a general holiday, the new married folk and their kith and kin, their past and future, were served up as topics of conversation, not merely at the various village tea-tables, but in the commercial room of the Lion at Brocksopp, which, there being no commercial gentlemen staying in the house, had been given up to the tenantry on the estate, who were given to understand that Mr. Teesdale, Mr. Creswell's agent, would attend to the bill. It was long since the Lion had done such a roaring trade, for the commercial gents, by whom the house was chiefly frequented, though convivial souls, were apt to be convivial on small orders, "fours" of rum and "sixes" of brandy; and it was only on exceptional occasions that old Mr. Mulock, who "travelled in hardware," would suffer himself to be fined a crown bowl of punch for having committed the uncommercial atrocity of smoking in the commercial room before seven o'clock, or young Mr. Cunynghame, who represented his own firm in Scotch goods—a very pushing young gentleman, and a wonderful fellow to get on—would "stand champagne round" when he had received a specially remunerative order. But now Miss Parkhurst, in the bar, had not a second to herself, the demand for her strong mahogany-coloured brandy-and-water was so great; steaming jorums of "hot with" here, huge goblets of "cold without" there; the fascinating Hebe of the Lion had not dispensed so much drink at one time since the day when old Major Barth was returned in the Conservative interest for Brocksopp—and the major, it is allowed, was not merely a hard drinker himself, but the cause of hard drinking in others; while as for old Tilley, the jolly landlord, he was so overwhelmed with the exertion of punch-compounding, that he took off the short-tailed snuff-coloured coat which he usually wore, and went to work in his shirt-sleeves, slicing lemons, mixing, strengthening, sweetening, —ay, and tasting too—until his pleasant

face, always round and red, assumed a greater rotundity and an extra glow, and his little, short, fat body ached again with fatigue.

But, as is very often the case in better society than that with which we are now engaged, the amount of conversation indulged in had not been in equal ratio with the amount of liquor consumed. They were very quiet drinkers in those parts, and on great occasions sat round the council fire as silently and gravely as a set of aboriginal Indians. They had touched lightly on the subject of the wedding, but only as men who knew that they had an interminable subject at hand, ready to fall back upon whenever they felt disposed, and from that they had jumped at a tangent to discussing the chances of the lambing season, where they were far more at home, and much more practical in what they had to say. The fertility of Farmer Porter's ewes, or the carelessness of Tom Howson, Farmer Jeffrey's shepherd, were topics which went home to every man present; on which each had a distinct opinion, which he delivered with far greater force and emphasis than when called upon to pronounce upon an analysis of the guiding motives of the human heart in connexion with the choice of a husband. Indeed, so much had to be said upon the subject of these "yows," that the conversation began to become rather tiresome to some members of the company, who were also tenants of the bridegroom's, but whose business connexions were rather with commerce than agriculture or stock-purchase. These gentry, who would have sat interested for that indefinite period known as "a blue moon," had the talk been of markets, and prices, and "quotations," at length thought it time to vary the intellectual repast, and one of them suggested that somebody should sing a song. In itself not a bad proposition, but one always hard to be properly carried out. A dead silence fell upon the company at once, broken by Farmer Whicher, who declared he had often heard neighbour Croke "wobble like a lavrock," and moved that neighbour Croke be at once called upon. Called upon Mr. Croke was unanimously, but being a man of uncertain temper he nearly spoiled the harmony of the evening by declaring flatly that he would be "darnged" if he would. A book-keeper in one of the Brocksopp mills, a young man of literary tendencies, who had erected several in memoriam tombstones to his own genius in the Brocksopp Banner and County Chronicle, then proposed that Mr. M'Shaw, who, as the speaker remarked, "came from the land which produced the inspired exciseman," would favour them with a Scotch ballad. But Mr. M'Shaw declined the compliment. A thrifty man with a large family, Alick M'Shaw always kept himself in check in every way where expense was concerned, and now for the first time for years he found himself in the position of being able to consume a large quantity of whisky, without being called upon to pay for it. He knew that the time taken up in singing the ballad would be so much time wasted, during which he must perforce leave off drinking, and so, though he had a pretty tenor voice, and sang very fairly, he pleaded a cold and made his excuse. Finally, everybody having been tried, and everybody having in more or less cantankerous manner refused, it fell upon Farmer Whicher to sing that ditty for which he was well known for a score of miles round, which he had sung for nearly a third of a century at various harvest homes, shearing feasts, and other country merry-makings, and which never failed—it being a supposed joyous and bacchanalian chant—in crushing the spirits and subduing the souls of those who listened to it. It was a performance which never varied the smallest iota in its details. The intending singer first laid down his pipe, carefully knocking out the ashes, and placing it by his right hand to act on emergency as a conductor's bâton, then assuming a most dismal expression of countenance, he glared round into the faces of those surrounding him to sue for pity, or to see if there were any chance of a reprieve, and finding neither he would clear his throat, which was in itself an operation of some magnitude, and commence the song as a solemn recitation; but the chorus, which was duly sung by all present, each man using the most doleful tune with which he was best acquainted, ran thus:

> Then pŭsh, pŭsh, pŭsh—the bōwl about,
> And pŭsh the bōwl to me-ee—
> The longer we sits here, and drinks,
> The merr-ī-er we shall be!

It is doubtful to what extent this doleful dirge might have been protracted, for the number of verses is beyond human reckoning, and the more frequently the choruses were repeated the more they are prolonged; but Mr. Teesdale, the agent, a shrewd man of business, saw his opportunity for making a cast, and accordingly, at the end of the ninth stanza, he banged the table with such

energy that his cue was taken by the more knowing ones, and the harmony was abandoned as Mr. Teesdale went on to say:

"Capital, bravo, excellent! Always look to you, Whicher, to sing us a good song! First time I heard you sing that was years ago, when our old friend Hardy gave us a supper on the occasion of opening his dancing school! Poor Hardy, not well, eh? or he'd have been here among us! Push the bowl about, eh? Ah, we're likely to have plenty of that sort of fun soon, if I'm correctly informed!"

"What's that, Muster Teesdale?" asked Farmer Adams. "Somebody going to be married, eh?"

"No, no, one at a time, Adams, one at a time!"

"What's comin' off then, Muster Teesdale?"

"Well, it's expected that in about a couple of months' time there'll be a general election, Mr. Adams, and you know what that means! I wasn't far out when I said that the bowl would be pushed about at such a time as that, was I?"

"That 'ee warn't, Muster Teesdale, that 'ee warn't! Not that we hold much wi' 'lections about here!"

"That's 'cos there's no proper spirit of opp'sition," said Mr. Croke, who was accustomed to speak very loudly and freely on political matters, and who was delighted at seeing the conversation taking this turn; "that's 'cos there's no proper spirit of opp'sition," he repeated, looking round him, partly in triumph, partly to see if any antagonist were making ready net and spear. "They Tories is 'lowed to walk over the course and du just as pleases 'em!"

"What sort of opp'sition could you expect, Muster Croke?" said Farmer Spalding, puffing at his long churchwarden. "What good could Lib'rals do in a borough like this here Brocksopp, for instance, where its factories, and works, and mills, and such like, are held by rich folk as ought to be Lib'rals and is Tories?"

"Why ought they?" asked Mr. Croke; and while his interlocutor was gathering up his answer, old Croke added, "I'm all for argeyment! I'm a Tory mysel', as all my house have been, but I like to see a opp'sition in everything, and a proper fight, not one-sided 'lections, such as we have seen! Well, Muster Spalding, and why should our rich party folk be Lib'rals and not Tories?"

"Because," said Mr. Spalding, fanning away the smoke from before him, and speaking with great deliberation, "because they sprung from the people, and therefore their symp'ties should be wi' those of whom they were afore they became rich."

"Like enough, like enough, neighbour Spalding. That's what's called mo-rality, that is; but it's not common sense! Common sense is, that it's lucky they grew rich; they becam' Tories, which is the same thing as meaning they wanted their money taken care of."

"Ay, ay, that's it, Croke!" said Farmer Adams. "You've just hit the way to put 'un! Lib'rals, when they've got nothing and want everything, Tories when they've got something and want to take care of it."

"Well, but what's Tories goin' to do this time?" asked Mr. Moule, a maltster in the town. "Our presen' member, Sir George Neal, won't stand again! Told me so his own self last time he was in town for quarter sessions—say's he's too old. My 'pinion is his wife won't let 'un. He's a rum 'un, is Sir George, and when he gets up to London by himself, he goes it, they *du* say!"

"Nansense, Moule! I wunner at a man o' your sense talkin' such stuff," said Farmer Croke. "That's playin' the Lib'ral game, that is!—though I hev understood that Sir George won't come forrerd again."

"And the Lib'rals is going to mek a tre-menjous struggle this time, I've heerd," observed Moule.

"Who are they goin' to bring forrerd, hev you heerd?" asked Mr. Spalding, with interest.

"Well, I did hear, but I've a'most forgot," said Mr. Moule, who was of a misty and a muddled nature. "No, now I reck'lect, it was young Bokenham!"

"What, son of old Tom Bokenham of Blott's Mills?" asked Mr. Spalding.

"That same! Old man's terrible rich, they du say; firm was Bokenham and Sculthorpe, but Sculthorpe broke his leg huntin' wi' Squire Peacock's harriers, and has been out of business for some time."

"He's just built two saw-mills in Galabin-street, hasn't he?" asked Mr. Croke.

"He has, and that plant in Harmer's-row is his too. Young Bill, he's lawyer up in London—lawyer they say, tho' I thowt he was a parson, as they told me he lives in a Temple, and he's wonderful clever in speakin' at club-meetin's and such like, and they du say that he's not only a Lib'ral,

but"—and here Mr. Moule sunk his voice to a whisper to give due horror to his revelation—"that he's an out-and-out Rad!"

"You don't say that!" said Farmer Adams, pushing away his chair with a creak, and gazing with terror at the speaker.

"They du!" said Mr. Moule, delighted and astonished to find himself of so much importance.

"That's a bad job!" said Mr. Croke, reflectively; "they carry a main lot o' weight in this borough do they Bokenhams! a main lot of weight!" And Mr. Croke shook his head with great solemnity.

"Don't be down-hearted, Mr. Croke!" said Mr. Teesdale, who had been a silent and an amused spectator of this scene. "No doubt Tommy Bokenham, who they say is a clever chap, and who'll be well backed by his father's banking account, is a formidable opponent. But I much doubt if our side won't be able to bring forward some one with as good a head on his shoulders and as much brass in his pockets!"

"Where's he to be found, Muster Teesdale? Sir George won't stand, and it would welly nigh break any one else's back in the neighbr'ood, 'less it were young Rideout, and all his money goes in horse-racin'!"

"What should you say," said Mr. Teesdale, becoming very much swollen with importance—"what should you say to Mr. Creswell?"

"Muster Creswell! What, Squire Creswell, your master, Muster Teesdale?" exclaimed Croke, completely astounded.

"My *employer*—Squire Creswell, my *employer!*" said Mr. Teesdale, making a mental note to refuse Farmer Croke the very next request he made, no matter what it might be.

"Are you in ayrnest, Muster Teesdale?" asked Spalding. "Is th' old squire comin' forward for Parlyment?"

"He is, indeed, Mr. Spalding," replied Teesdale; "and he'll make the Lion his head-quarters, won't he, Mr. Tilley?" he said to the old landlord, who had just entered bearing a steaming bowl of punch.

"I hope so, sir—I hope so!" said the old man, in his cheery voice. "The Lion always was the Blue house. I've seen Sir George Neal, quite dead beat wi' fatigue and hoarse wi' hollerin', held up at that window by Squire Armstrong on one side, and Charley Rea, him as left here and went away to Chiney or some furrin' part, on the other, and screechin' for cheers and Kentish fires and Lord knows what, to the mob outside! I ha' got the blue banner somewhere now, that Miss Good, as was barmaid here afore Miss Parkhurst came, 'broidered herself for Sir George at last election."

"Well, there'll be no banners or anything of that kind now, Tilley; that's against the law, that is, but there'll be plenty of fun for all that, and plenty of fighting for the matter of that, for Mr. Creswell means to win!"

"He really du?" asked Farmer Croke, once more in high spirits.

"He really does! And, what's more, I may tell you, gentlemen, as it's no longer any secret, that Mr. Creswell's candidature is approved by her Majesty's Government, by Sir George Neal, and by the principal county gentlemen, so that there's no likelihood of any split in the Conservative camp! And as for young Mr. Bokenham, of whom our friend Moule here has told us so much, well—even if he is all that our friend Moule has made him out—we must try and beat him even then!"

Poor Mr. Moule! it was lucky he had enjoyed his temporary notoriety, for the sarcasm of the agent speedily relegated him to his old post of butt and bolt.

The household at Woolgreaves seemed to get on very well during the absence of its legitimate heads. The young ladies rather gloried in their feeling of independence, in the freedom from the necessity of having to consult any one or to exercise the smallest system of restraint, and they took pleasure in sitting with Mrs. Ashurst and ministering to her small wants. They had always had a kindly feeling towards the old lady, and this had been increased by her helplessness and by her evident unconsciousness of the manner in which the world was slipping away from her. There is something sad in witnessing the struggle for resignation with which a person, smitten with mortal disease, and conscious of their fate, strives to give up all worldly hopes and cares, and to wean their thoughts and aspirations from those things on which they have hitherto been bent; but there is something infinitely more sad in watching the sick-bed of one who is all unconscious of the fiat that has gone forth, who knows, indeed, that her strength is not what it was, but who has no idea that the hand is already uplifted and the dart already poised. Mrs. Ashurst was in this last-named condition; she had gradually

been growing weaker and weaker, but there were times when she plucked up wonderfully, and when she would talk of things present, ay, and of things future, as though she had years of life to run. The girls encouraged her to talk. Dr. Osborne had told them that she must be "roused" as much as possible, and they would sit with her and chatter for hours, the old lady taking no inconsiderable share in the conversation. It was astonishing with what unanimity they had hitherto kept off the subject of the marriage, the very topic which one might have imagined would have been the first they would have discussed, but whenever they came near it, whenever they grew "warm," as children say in the old-fashioned game, they seemed by tacit instinct bound to draw away and leave it untouched. At last one day, after the married couple had been a week absent, Mrs. Ashurst said, quietly, "Maud, my dear! weren't you very much astonished when you heard your uncle was going to marry my Marian?"

"No, dear Mrs. Ashurst. Though I'm not very old, I've lived too long to be astonished at anything, and certainly that did not surprise me!"

"It did me!" said Gertrude, for once venturing on an independent remark.

"And why did it surprise you, Gerty?" asked the old lady, already smiling at the quaint reply which she always expected from Gertrude.

"Because I didn't think uncle was so silly!" Gertrude blurted out. "At least, I don't mean that exactly; don't misunderstand me, dear Mrs. Ashurst, but I never thought that uncle would marry again at all; such an idea never entered our heads, did it, Maud?" But Maud declining to play chorus, Gertrude continued: "And if I had thought of such a thing, I should always have set uncle down as marrying some one more his own age, and—and that kind of thing!"

"There is certainly a great disparity of years between them," said Mrs. Ashurst, with a sigh. "I trust that won't work to the disadvantage of my poor, dear girl!"

"I don't think you need fear that, dear old friend!" said Maud; and then thinking that her tone of voice might have been hard, she laid her hand on the old lady's shoulder and added, "Miss Ash—I mean Mrs. Creswell, you know, is wise beyond her years! She has already had the management of a large household, which, as I understand, she conducted excellently; and even did she show a few shortcomings, uncle is the last man to notice them!"

"Yes, my dear, I know; but I didn't mean that! I was selfishly thinking whether Marian had done rightly in accepting a man so much older than herself! She did it for my sake, poor child—she did it for my sake!" And the old lady burst into tears.

"Don't cry, dear!" said Gertrude. "You are not to blame, I'm sure, whatever has happened."

"How can you make yourself so perfectly ridiculous, Gertrude!" said strong-minded Maud. "No one is to blame about anything! And, my dear Mrs. Ashurst, I don't think, if I were you, I should look upon your daughter's present proceeding as such an act of self-sacrifice. Depend upon it she is very well pleased at her new dignity and position." Maud knew that the Creswells were only "new people," but she could not sit by and hear them patronised by a schoolmaster's widow.

"Well, my dear, very likely," said the old lady, meekly; "though she might have been a baronet's lady if she had only chosen. I'm sure young Sir Joseph Attride would have proposed to her, with a little more encouragement; and though my poor husband always said he had pudding in his head instead of brains, that wouldn't have been any just cause or impediment. You never heard about Sir Joseph, Maud?"

"No; Miss Ashurst never spoke to us of any of her conquests," said Maud, with something of a sneer.

"Well, my dear, Marian was never one to say much, you know; but I'm sure she might have done as well as any girl in the county, for the matter of that. There was Sir Joseph, and young Mr. Peacock, before he went up to live in London, and a young German, who was over here to learn English—Burckhardt his name was, and I think his friends were counts, or something of that kind, in their own country—oh, quite grand, I assure you!"

"I wonder whether uncle knows of all these former rivals?" asked Gertrude.

"No, my dear, of course he doesn't, and of course Marian would not be such a goose as to tell him. I think I'll sleep for a bit now, dears; I'm tired."

They kissed her, and left the room; but before the old lady had dropped off she said to herself, "I wasn't going to let them crow over me, or think that my Marian couldn't have had her pick and choice of a husband, if she'd been so minded."

Maud and Gertrude were going towards the garden after leaving Mrs. Ashurst; they saw the postman quitting the door, and the servant came to them with a letter, which she handed to Maud. That young lady opened and read it, but she could scarcely have gone through a few lines, when a particularly stern expression came over her face, her brows were knit, and her lips set tightly together.

"What's the matter, Maud?" asked Gertrude, looking on in wonder. "Who's the letter from?"

"From our new mistress!" said the girl; "at least, I expect she intends we should regard her as such—Mrs. Creswell. They are to be at home at the end of next week, and my lady thinks she shall require what is now our music room for her boudoir. We can have the room at the end of the north passage. Can we, indeed! How very considerate! And it's no use appealing to uncle! He daren't help us, I know! What did I tell you, Gertrude? This woman won't rest until she has crushed us into a state of mere dependence!"

BIRMINGHAM A CENTURY AGO.

Local history, carefully done, is as interesting in its own way as individual biography. On looking back into the condition of past times, we can trace how the changes in modes of life and thought have been brought about by the discoveries characteristic of the last two or three generations. We can see how gas has diminished the number of street robberies; how railroads have all but put an end to highwaymen; how free trade has altered the course of industrial discontent; and how, instead of petitions to kings and courts for a continuance of certain fashions whereby a number of hands are employed, manufactures are now left to find their own level and fluctuate with the rest, sure that when one thing goes out another comes in, and that new manipulations can be learnt when the old have ceased to attract. We shall find how true all this is if we take Mr. J. A. Langford* for our guide, and go through the most salient points of Birmingham history according to his showing. We could not have a better guide, for he has done his work both well and thoroughly.

In 1741, Birmingham was comparatively a mere village, with cherry orchards and flower gardens, bowling greens and grazing plots, where now stand the thickest of the shops and the busiest of the factories. Just about the spot occupied by Nelson's statue was the Old Cross, a square building with open archways on each side, the floor space of which was used as a Saturday market, the upper room as a military guard-house, and considered the centre of the Birmingham of the day. Some of the advertisements of the time are very quaint. Among them is one of three sons at a birth —"Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;" another of "An old-accustomed Mug-house to be lett;" another advertises a runaway wife, who had "eloped from her husband without any manner of reason, and took some things of Value with her." Godfrey Wildsmith, the husband in question, advertises her partly to warn the trading world against trusting her with goods, partly to say that "if any one will help her to him again they shall be well rewarded and as little regarded, and shall have a Strike of Grains for their Pains of me, Godfrey Wildsmith." Penelope Pretty, too, is advertised as having also eloped from her spouse "without any just cause or reason," but "if she will return again and behave as she ought to do, she shall be kindly received by her husband, Edward Pretty." Other advertisements tell how certain gentlemen were married to certain ladies, one to "an agreeable young Gentlewoman with a Fortune of one thousand pounds;" another to "a beautiful young Lady with a great Fortune and fine Accomplishments;" a third to a "young Lady of Great Merit with a Fortune of ten thousand pounds;" a fourth gets a "young Lady endowed with every qualification that can render the Marriage State happy;" while Miss M. E., a "country young Woman, with good Health and a tolerable Person, brought up in an honest and plain Way, about Twenty years of age, and whose Father, she thinks, will give her five hundred pounds down if she marries with his consent, offers herself for a Wife to any sober, good-tempered, well-looking Man between Twenty and Thirty, who is settled in a good Trade in Birmingham or that Neighbourhood, in which she promises to give every Assistance in her Power." If things are settled to her satisfaction, she promises to make an obedient and good wife. And then comes a postscript: "My Father says Trade is better than the Farming Business." In another page we learn how Samuel Whitehurst, having tried the state which Miss M. E. so desired to know, is now as anxious to be rid of his bargain as he was once, presumably, anxious to obtain it; wherefore he sells his wife to Thomas Griffiths for one shilling, money down, "to take her with all faults." The entry was made in the toll book of the Bell Inn, Edgbaston-street, and the commentator stated that "the parties are exceedingly well pleased." But the most painful advertisement of all was dated November 11, 1771, setting forth how "a Negro Boy from Africa, supposed to be about Ten or Eleven Years of Age, remarkably straight, well proportioned, speaks tolerably good English, of a mild Disposition, friendly, officious, sound, healthy, fond of Labour, and for colour an excellent fine black," is to be "sold by Auction at

* A Century of Birmingham Life; or a Chronicle of Local Events from 1741 to 1841. Compiled and Edited by John Alfred Langford. Osborn, Birmingham; Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., London.

the House of Mrs. Webb, in the City of Lichfield, and known by the sign of the Bakers' Arms."

"Spring steel hoops in the neatest fashion and at the lowest prices," are advertised as made and sold at Birmingham, just as crinolines might be advertised now; and does not this read like a description of the vanishing bonnets and tumbling ends of wisp-like hair so much affected at the present day?

Let her Cap be a Butterfly slightly hung on,
Like the Shell of a Lapwing just hatched on her Crown,
Behind with a Coach-horse short dock off your hair,
Stick a Flower before skew wiff with an air.

Certainly if history never repeats itself, fashions do!

In 1777 the total annual amount paid by passengers between Birmingham and London, Sheffield, Coventry, and Bristol, was nineteen thousand one hundred and forty-one pounds, and there were three thousand nine hundred and fifty-two carriages plying in the year. Of these some were "flying coaches," which crawled along the bad roads at a pace about equalled by our drays and waggons; and which had further the misfortune to be every now and then stopped by highwaymen, who rifled the passengers with more or less brutality. Up to 1785 the mails had been brought into Birmingham by postboys on horseback; but on the 23rd of August, the editor of the Gazette informs his readers that the "London mail will be brought to this town by coach for the first time to-morrow." It was Major Palmer's project to have the mails conveyed by coaches instead of by mounted postboys; and it was thought wonderful when a letter could be sent from London to Birmingham at the small charge of ninepence.

The difficulty of communication, and the defective state of the police, made easy times for swindlers, though their punishment was severe enough when caught. There was that famous affair of Henry Griffin, or Hubbard, the so-called Duke of Ormond, who began his career in Birmingham, towards the end of the year 1791, and who made so good a thing of his talents for roguery while the game was warm, but who got behindhand with success at last, and finished, poor wretch! on the gallows. His career had been an eventful and an extraordinary one. A Virginian by birth, and respectably connected, he had come over to England, where he had gone through a variety of disreputable adventures and successes. As the Duke of Ormond, he had swindled all sorts of cautious tradesmen and experienced bankers; he had beguiled more than one lady of rank, and had got money as well as other things of more value from his dupes by his fine address and silvery tongue; he had eloped with a pretty young woman, the daughter of the landlord of the Blue Bell in Leicester, who was vastly proud of her ducal conquest; and when attacked and taken, he shot at Wallis the constable and just missed shooting him dead on the spot. The ball went into his mouth but lodged there, and was spat out flattened; and the official got off with his life truly, but at the expense of a lacerated tongue, the loss of six teeth, and a piece of his upper lip. Even at the foot of the scaffold the Duke could not forbear his old tricks. He sent for a tailor who lived opposite to Newgate, to measure him for a suit of mourning. "The taylor thinking his customer's *tricks* at an end, immediately made the clothes, and carried them to the cells, where Griffin very deliberately put them on, declaring he was never better fitted, and paid many compliments on the neatness of the suit, &c. The taylor, seeing no overtures of payment, reminded his employer of his charge." Griffin turning round, replied, "True, Mr. Taylor, your charge is moderate, and I will put you in a way of being paid. I know (continued the malefactor) that you let out your house at sixpence a head at every hanging bout; now as I am shortly to be hanged, and you know, Mr. Taylor, I am no common rascal, I would advise you to raise your price to half-a-crown. If that won't do, why you may have your cloaths again, but I am determined first to be hanged in them." He was hanged that same day, having first tried to stab himself, and then it was said taking poison: but neither means proved effectual, and so the law took its course.

There are three things which always must accompany the idea of the Birmingham of the past—buttons, buckles, and riots. We will take the buttons first.

By an act, the eighth of Queen Anne, "any Taylor or other Person convicted of making, covering, selling, using, or setting on to a Garment any Buttons covered with cloth, or other Stuff of which Garments are made, shall Forfeit Five Pounds, for every Dozen of such Buttons, or in Proportion for any lesser quantity;" and by an act of the seventh of George the First, "any wearer of such unlawful Buttons is liable to the penalty of Forty Shillings per Dozen, and in Proportion for any lesser quantity." The Birmingham button makers were resolved to protect their rights, and on April 4th, 1791, Thomas Gem, the solicitor to the committee for the protection of the button trade, advertised a reward for any information against the wearers of the unlawful covered buttons. On the 21st of March previous, indeed, a tradesman in London had been fined "nearly twenty-six pounds," on two informations, for selling the obnoxious articles; still in spite of penalties and prosecutions, covered buttons came in, and metal buttons went out; and for all the agitation respecting the proper gilding of the true Birmingham button—for all the encouragement given by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who, as the Gazette joyfully says, "Now always wears, both in his morning and evening dress, engraved fancy white and yellow metal buttons," buttons, like buckles, followed the inexorable and mysterious laws of fashion.

Buckles, too, had a rough time of it when shoe-strings came in; and a deputation of buckle manufacturers went to London to bespeak the favour of the Duke of Clarence, and through him, of the navy, the court, and royal family generally. The duke gave the

gracious answer "that he was the last to encourage shoe-strings; the custom of wearing them he considered extremely ridiculous, and injurious to an extensive manufacture. That he never wore them himself, or suffered any of his officers on board to use them," &c. The same paragraph, too, which announced the gratifying fact that the Prince of Wales wore metal buttons, added this no less gratifying piece of news: "The unmanly shoe-string will henceforth be thrown aside for the *buckle*. On his birthday, his Royal Highness, and all his sisters, appeared in the Soho new-invented shoe latchets, and have since continued to wear them. Indeed, no well-dressed gentleman or lady now appears without these buttons, and the ornament of the buckle." Again, another paragraph said, "It is with singular pleasure that we state, that, on the queen's birthday, *buckles* were universally prevalent. The beauty and brilliancy of those worn by the Prince of Wales, Duke of York, and Earl of Fife, attracted the notice of the whole drawing-room."

As for the riots of Birmingham, they are legion, and from all manner of causes. The Birmingham riots, par excellence, that raged in February, 1791, and which were so bad while they lasted, were riots of principle, and all the more fierce because on points which no one can prove for another, and where we must all stand or fall according to our light. Dr. Priestley, Free Thought, the French Revolution, and Unitarianism, were the windmills which the mob attacked with fire and sword, the exciting cause being the simple fact that a number of gentlemen chose to dine together on the fourteenth of July, to commemorate the French Revolution—"the auspicious day which witnessed the Emancipation of twenty-six millions of people from the yoke of Despotism, and restored the blessings of equal Government to a truly great and enlightened Nation." "The tocsin of war," says Mr. Langford, "was sounded in the same paper," the Gazette; for immediately under the above advertisement we find this ominous announcement:

On Friday next will be published,

Price One Halfpenny,

An Authentic List of all those who Dine at the Hotel in Temple-row, Birmingham, on Thursday, the 14th instant, in Commemoration of the French Revolution.

Vivant Rex et Regina.

The dinner took place as advertised, and the mob broke loose as threatened. For four days they pillaged, and burned, and rioted to their hearts' content; attacking only the private dwellings and chapels of the Unitarian and free-thought party. On the 16th the magistrates appealed to them tenderly to stop their rather excited proceedings; and on the 17th they appealed to them more urgently; and the arm of the law, hitherto numbed, began to use a little action, and tried to put out the fire it had allowed to get to such a head. So by degrees the storm roared itself into quiet, and the lawless upholders of constituted authority, the anarchical adherents of church and king, calmed down into ordinary citizens again. Only twelve of the rioters were made prisoners, and of these four were found guilty, and two hanged. For, indeed, it was considered that they had served their king and country by their violence, and if such a small misfortune as a death or two had been the consequence, even that did not prove that they had committed any crime. But the culprits escaped against such overwhelming evidence, that "a Birmingham jury" became almost as well known as "a Welsh jury," and in the same way. An anecdote is given of a gentleman who, soon after the trial, was "hunting with Mr. Corbett's fox-hounds, and was so sure of killing the fox, that he cried, 'Nothing but a Birmingham jury can save him!'" The amount of the damage done and allowed by the court was twenty-six thousand nine hundred and sixty-one pounds two shillings and threepence.

After this Birmingham seemed to have acquired a taste for tumult. Incendiaries in 1792; the little riot, as it was called, also in 1792; scarcity riots in 1795; a bread riot in May, 1800; and another in September of the same year; a riot in 1810, originally caused by two women quarrelling in the market-place over the price of potatoes; distress riots in 1812; a riot in 1816, because Mr. Jabet, a zealous supporter of law and order, profoundly content with things as they were, published a pamphlet to counteract some of an agitating tendency which had been lately set afloat; and the chartist riots of 1839, about summarise the turbulent side of Birmingham, though the list by no means exhausts the political action of the town.

It would be impossible in a short abstract like this to go fully into any one given part of Mr. Langford's book; but the curious may trace for themselves, among other things, the gradual changes and improvements in the character of the amusements and diversions of the place. First came automata and wax-works—the Madame Tussauds of the day; then the theatre had a beginning, and soon flourished powerfully, supported by some of the highest names of the stage; then book clubs and debating societies gave a more intellectual turn to things; and so by degrees the mental life of the town unfolded more and more, till from an ignorant and bigoted village Birmingham became an enlightened and important city. It obtained its charter of incorporation only in 1838, though a petition, signed by eighty-four of the inhabitants, was drawn up so early as 1716, praying George the First to make Birmingham a corporation. Things move slowly at times, and the first steps are always difficult; when fairly planted future progress comes quickly and easily enough.

Many great names have associated themselves with Birmingham, and it is only fair to give the summary in Mr. Langford's own words: "Birmingham has also no insignificant claims upon the gratitude of the civilised world. Her share in the development of the great instruments of

prosperity and progress is surpassed by few cities in the empire. It was here that Baskerville perfected his type-casting, and published those 'magnificent editions' which 'went forth to astonish all the librarians of Europe.' It was here that Mr. Priestley made those discoveries which earned for him 'the title of the founder of pneumatic chemistry.' Here James Watt perfected the steam engine, which is, says Mr. Smiles, 'without exception, the greatest invention of modern times,' and which has been instrumental in effecting the most remarkable revolution in all departments of industry that the world has ever seen. Here that captain of industry, Matthew Boulton, pursued his wonderful career, and gave the Birmingham manufactures the world-wide reputation which they have ever since retained. For, 'great as the genius and invaluable as the inventions of James Watt were, they would have been wasted but for the indomitable energy, the untiring hopefulness, and the commercial genius of Matthew Boulton. While the timid and invalid inventor would have failed, and have left his great discoveries to be revived when he had long departed, Matthew Boulton gave exactly the element of commercial success. His refined taste, his unbounded energy, his almost reckless profusion, had made Soho famous even for its minor manufactures; but when the steam engine was added, its success was complete.' Here William Murdoch invented lighting by gas, and in 1802, in celebration of the peace of Amiens, Soho was brilliantly illuminated by the new power of light. Here, too, Thomas Attwood and his compeers laboured until they obtained the Reform Bill of 1832—a bill which, whatever were its shortcomings, has had a most important influence on those great measures of legislation which have done so much to ameliorate the condition and to elevate the minds and aspirations of the people. And here, too, David Cox produced those glorious pictures which are the delight of all who have taste to admire the beautiful in art. Birmingham has indeed reason to be proud of the labours of her sons —her own and those whom she has adopted."

Among whom may be classed the writer of this very book, a self-made man, who has obtained no small degree of local distinction, and who has certainly produced a most interesting and valuable work at the cost of immense pains, industry, and deep research.

ARMOUR-PLATED HOUSES.

THERE are some individuals who are for ever accusing themselves of faults. "I am the idlest fellow in the world," some member of this class will say; or "I am as proud as Lucifer." "I am sadly impetuous," says another; "I want patience;" "I have a very hot temper," and the like. Self-accusations of this sort are seldom entirely ruinous to the character, and it is rare, indeed, to find a man who will say, "I am a craven at heart," or, "I am naturally very stingy and mean."

Now it is a curious fact that this self-accusatory habit, into which so many individuals among us fall, is possessed by us also to some extent as a people. We English stand almost alone among the nations of the earth in our practice of habitual and liberal self-censure, or in more vulgar language of "crying stinking fish." We are always taking ourselves to task, pointing out our own defects, calling upon all men to observe them, and showing how much better things are done in other countries. "Our town is ill-administered," we say, as indeed, it is; "we have no government;" "our cabs and omnibuses are a disgrace to civilisation."

But of all the accusations which it is our practice to bring against ourselves, the oftenest repeated, and the most severe, are those with which we charge ourselves in connexion with the external aspect of the great town which successive generations of Anglo-Saxons have built on the banks of the Thames, and which we are ever ready to call the biggest and the ugliest in the world. In truth, we complain of our capital very bitterly as inconvenient and mean-looking, mismanaged as to its street-traffic, hideous as to its public buildings, and above all, signal for its dirt and sootiness. Concerning any schemes for the improvement of its æsthetic condition we are invariably despondent in the last degree. When some new range of buildings, some effort of a decorative kind, is in contemplation, we talk of it quite hopelessly. "It is no use," we say, "we can't do it; there will be another fine site destroyed, another good opportunity thrown away. And then the smoke and dirt. If we were to succeed in building a handsome street, the beauty of it would be inevitably destroyed in a year or two by the accumulation of soot and dirt, which would be certain to gather on the surface of the houses." Now with regard to some of these incentives to despair, which afflict us when we venture to consider the present state and future prospects of London as regarded from an architectural point of view, there is certainly much difficulty in finding any reasonable ground for hope. Uniformity of plan, common sense in construction, originality in design, or even the power of collating; of setting up an edifice, which shall without originality be agreeable and rational to the eye—these seem to be qualities which we may hardly hope to obtain; but such an attainment as a measure of increased cleanliness, and some degree of freedom from the tyranny of soot, it does seem not wholly irrational or Utopian to hope for. It is such an emancipation from the thraldom of smoke and dust that we desire; and it is with the object of proposing a method of defying these London despots that the suggestion contained in this short paper is now put forward.

It must have happened to most persons who are in the habit of using their eyes, and of speculating on what those organs reveal to them, to observe how many advantages belong to the use—in all cases in which they can, with propriety, be structurally employed—of what are called Dutch Tiles. Any one entering a

butcher's or butterman's shop, the walls of which have been lined with them, or standing before a fireplace of which they have formed the main decoration, must have been struck at once by their appropriateness in all ways; for not only is the effect produced on the eye by their use extremely agreeable, but they have besides the advantage of ensuring the utmost cleanliness wherever they are introduced. This, indeed, is one of the special advantages belonging always to glazed surfaces. A glazed surface is not susceptible of permanent contamination by dirt, whether in a dry or liquid form It is indeed hardly capable of serious pollution at all. Whatever lights upon it finds no hold, and is not retained as it would be in falling on a dry, or rough substance. If liquid descends upon a glazed surface, it either glances off it, when the position of such surface is vertical, or remains outside if it is horizontal, never sinking into it, and disappearing at last by a process of evaporation; while if, on the other hand, the matter which rests on this same surface be of a dry, instead of a liquid nature, it is removed in a moment with the mere whisking of a feather brush, or of a common duster. We must all have noticed that when dirt of any kind lodges—which it rarely does—upon the face of a mirror, it is most easily removed; also that the glass of our windows is cleaned in a very few minutes, and by the use of no more formidable machinery than a cloth and a basin of water.

The advantages belonging to this kind of hard polished surface, then, being so obvious, in this particular respect of its imperviousness to the action of dirt, one cannot help asking why it should not be more extensively given to all such structures as are, by the very necessities of their existence, continually in contact with that abominable mixture of soot and dust of which London air seems to be mainly compounded? Why not present to that grimy element a wall or rampart, which it cannot penetrate, or get hold of, but off which the filth of which this same sorry atmosphere is composed, will glance as an arrow does off a steel breast-plate? Why not in short—to put the subject of this inquiry in two words—why not construct our London houses with a glazed surface composed of tiles or glazed bricks, next the street?

This idea, which at first seems a little startling is in reality both simple and easy of execution; and it seems a legitimate subject for surprise that it has not been suggested, and the experiment tried, long ago. What could be more simple—since we know of a means of averting a certain evil—than to employ it in a case in which that particular evil oppresses us in a special degree. The evil at present under consideration is the lodgment of dirt on the walls of our houses; if we know how to construct a wall on which the dirt will not lodge, ought we not in common reason to avail ourselves of such knowledge? And this knowledge it can hardly be denied that we do certainly possess. Such a wall as would present an impregnable face to the assaults of dirt in every one of the legion forms in which it is encountered in this town, it would be by no means difficult to set up. There are, indeed, two ways in which this object, the importance of which there can be no doubt about, might be accomplished. It might be effected either by facing the house which we desire to protect from external defilement with an outer layer of tiles, like a veneer; or building the wall of the house itself with bricks, one side or end of which—the side or end, of course, next the street—should be glazed in the same manner as the tiles are. There might be some practical difficulty in the making of such bricks. It is not easy to understand of what sort; still it behoves any one not a brickmaker by profession to abstain from speaking with authority as to the feasibility of constructing bricks with a glazed or partially glazed surface. With regard to the tiles, however, it is possible to speak with more of certainty. We have ocular demonstration of their fitness to form an outer coating or facing to a wall; as witness the sides of such shops as those above alluded to, or the sloping reflectors past which the light glances so brightly as it descends into the tunnels of the Metropolitan Railway at some of their stations, which, as is the case at Baker-street, have been found especially difficult to light. The effect of the structural use of tiles, in all these cases, is eminently satisfactory, and seems distinctly to prove the possibility of employing them for this purpose of facing the walls of our houses. Concerning the applicability of glazed bricks to a similar use, the writer confesses that he has little real doubt, though he has thought it right to speak with some degree of hesitation on the subject. Common sense suggests that it would be as easy to make glazed bricks as glazed tiles; and, supposing this to be so, it seems probable that the bricks would, on the whole, be the best for this purpose, inasmuch as, being an integral portion of the wall itself, they would not be liable to displacement, as might be the case with the tiles.

Were London built of houses with such a surface as this, the fitness of which is here advocated, the advantages which we should gain would be enormous. Among them certainly not the least would be the doing away with the necessity for those periodical paintings, which are such a source of vexation to householders under existing arrangements. What a thing it would be to escape the series of annoyances which this infliction brings upon us every three or four years — annoyance of having a scaffolding raised before the house, by means of which we are continually expecting that burglars will obtain access to our premises; annoyance of finding working men hanging against our walls, like samphire gatherers at their "dreadful trade," and looking in at the windows at unpropitious moments; annoyance caused by the smell of paint; and, finally, annoyance of receiving a very long bill for what has disturbed the peace of one's household so very much, and resulted in such a

very small measure of gratification. From all these troubles we should at any rate be free. No house-painting would be required any more. Every time there was a shower of rain the outsides of our places of abode would be washed from top to bottom; or, in default of rain, they could be cleaned with infinite ease by the application of a discharge of water from a small engine.

It is to be hoped that no one will suppose, that the suggestion hazarded in these lines is put forward with a maniacal conviction that the whole of London ought suddenly to be rased to the ground, and a new town built up with houses decorated in the manner here advocated. All that it is intended to urge is that, as occasion serves, it might be advisable to try some experiments in connexion with this idea. The building of houses is a process which is going on, in and about London, every day, and all day long, and even supposing that there might be a difficulty in applying this system of decoration to houses already built—though even this does not seem very impracticable—it might still be tried in the case of houses in the course of erection, or yet to be built.

After all the attempt would not be a very rash one; we have—as has been said above—experience of a successful use of tiles, somewhat analogous to that here proposed, on the walls of certain dairies, and butchers' shops, and the author of this paper has also seen them employed in another way—to which he may perhaps be excused for alluding a little more at length—introduced, that is, shoulder-high as a sort of facing to the walls of a staircase. These walls had originally been painted, but had got, in a short time, to be quite disfigured with dirt and stains; the house being full of children and servants, who were constantly using the stairs, and bringing hands which (the scene being laid in London), were not always scrupulously clean, into contact with the wall, not to speak of the deteriorating effect produced by the continual bumping against the paint of all those numerous objects which have, in the course of the year to be carried up from below stairs, or brought down from above. The staircase at last under these defiling influences got to look so dirty that the proprietor of the house of which it formed part, determined to try the experiment whether a glazed surface would not defy the contact, both of hands in a doubtful condition as to cleanliness, of the dresses in which the servants did their dirty work, and of all the other polluting influences to which staircase walls are liable, and gave orders that they should incontinently be faced with tiles, to the height of some five feet above the wainscot. Nothing could be more entirely successful than the result. The tiles after a year's contact with doubtful hands, dirty work-dresses, and the rest, remaining perfectly bright and speckless, and showing no indication anywhere of having been touched by any object that was in the slightest degree uncleanly. The surface in short would not receive dirt, or receiving, would not retain it.

Since the above was written, additional corroboration of the theory that glazed tiles are exceedingly well adapted for purposes of external mural decoration, has come in the writer's way, in the shape of an account of Lisbon, published in a new magazine brought out by the members of the Civil Service, and called Under the Crown. In a description of the Portuguese capital, which appears in the notes referred to, mention is made of the use of glazed tiles as a commonly-used facing to the houses in Lisbon; and the effect is spoken of as in every way most satisfactory, the bright look of the houses and their extreme cleanliness being especially enlarged on. Here, then, is evidence of the fitness of these tiles for out-door service which is surely of great value, and which might encourage us to try them in our own metropolis, where they would be even more appropriate than in a city like Lisbon, which is so much less subject than London to all sorts of polluting influences. We Londoners should indeed be—perhaps with the exception of some of the manufacturing towns—the most special gainers of all by such a change as the employment of these tiles would effect. Our town would be clean-looking and cheerful, instead of being, as it is now, foul and dismal in the extremest degree, and in place of the dark and sooty structures which at present border our streets, we should have rows of bright and comely buildings all about us. In a word, we might rationally hope at least to have pleasant objects to look at as we walked along, instead of unseemly ones—a white town to live in in place of a black one—a clean town instead of a dirty one.

OLD DICK PURSER.

"Richard Purser, a farm labourer, lately died, in the workhouse, aged one hundred and twelve. He worked in the fields within seven years of his decease."
—Country Paper.

Well, it do seem a power of a time ago
Since old King Garge came here, you know;
But I remember't by this zign—
That spring the beans were coming on vine.

I was twenty-four on the very day
That the Royal Garge went down, they say;
The admiral's money it still lies there—
'Tis eighty-eight years come next Stroud vair.

We drove to Gloucester a load of corn
That June the Prince of Wales was born;
I couldn't forget it for all squire's wealth—
For they made me drunk a drinking his health.

The year I was courting my little May
Was the year of the fighting in 'Merikay;
'Twas all, as I've heard, about some tax
That government men put on their backs.

I had been married 'bout fifteen year,
When up went bread, and up went beer;
'Twas the Revolootion, as I understood,
The time we was felling Thorley Wood.

They cut off the French king's head, I heerd—
And many a better, as I'm afeared;
And then came Bony, that terrible Turk,
Just as I'd taken to hedging work.

They used to say at the "Barley Mow"
That Bony was going to pass the plough
Clean over every palace top,
And clear the ground for another crop.

But the volks say this and the volks say that,
And one never knows what some chaps are at;
For, by and by, at Waterloo,
We took Nap in spite of his blustering crew.

I mind the time, for the day before
I, Jack Ward, and old Tom Shore
Fought the keepers by Burnt Wood Ride,
And the old squire's son got shot in the zide.

They named me Blucher for that same fight,
For I came up just at the fust twilight,
And went in at 'em hot and fast,
And stayed there, too, till the danger past.

Ah, they was times, and the beer was good
That we drank that night in Thorley Wood;—
But the cowards came with five more men,
Or we'd beaten the whole lot back again.

Our Waterloo I called it first,
Fair up and down, till we got the worst;
I only wish I were forty now,
And we had 'em again on Breakback Brow.

Ah! the turmots, they never looked so well
As the day I came from jail, and fell
Half giddy, there by Charford-hill,
And felt I wasn't a prisoner still.

One hundred and twelve last Lammas fair;
O yes, I live in the workhouse there;
But I don't get enough of the open lands,
And I've got the palsy in both my hands.

I'm deaf, and I'm lame from a vall I had;
Well, I've lived my life, and I'm not a lad;
This churchyard here is a quiet lot—
So I've just come out to choose a spot.

NATIVE TRIBES OF NEW MEXICO.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

[We have the opportunity of presenting, in advance of the publication of a book of travels by Dr. W. A. Bell, F.R.G.S., recently engaged on the survey for a Southern Railway to the Pacific Ocean, some very curious and interesting matter.]

Arizona was separated from New Mexico in 1863; it is desirable, however, for the present purpose, to consider both territories as a whole under the old name.

Four distinct races are now encountered by the traveller in New Mexico. These are:

1. The Americans . . .	about	13,000
2. The Mexicans	„	75,000
3. The Pueblo Indians .	„	16,000
4. The Wild Indians . .	„	23,000
		127,000

The semi-civilised native races and their natural enemies require to be treated of separately. The Pueblo, or town Indians, are the most remarkable and important tribe to be found in any part of the United States or Canada; they are, in fact, the only native race whose presence on the soil is not more of a curse than anything else.

Whilst on the plains, whatever belief we had in the nobility of the redskin, or the cruelty of the frontier man, quickly vanished, and we learnt to regard the Indian of the plains as the embodiment of all that was cruel, dastardly, and degrading. We were not long, however, in the Rio Grande valley before we encountered a new race, as different from our old enemies as light from darkness.

I first met a small party of these people on the plain a few miles west of the Pecos; they were neatly dressed in buckskin shirt and breeches, which latter fitted tightly to their legs; they wore moccasins on their feet and a girdle around their waist. Their heads were bare, their hair black, and cut square in front almost to the eyebrows, but gathered up behind into a queue, and bound round with red cord, a narrow band also passed over the hair in front and was fastened underneath. They were short in stature, thickly built, with quiet intelligent faces and large sorrowful eyes. I have never, during my residence in their valley, seen a Pueblo Indian laugh; I do not remember even a smile. They carried no arms that we could discover, but each pushed before him a little hand-cart composed of a body of wicker-work on wooden wheels, filled with grapes, the produce of their vineyards. They were on their way to Las Vegas, and seemed so sure of a good market, that we had to pay ten dollars for a large basket of grapes weighing from fifty to eighty pounds. At Santa Fé I watched these people coming and going, bringing their produce in the morning—peaches, grapes, onions, beans, melons, and hay for sale, then buying what necessaries they wanted, and trudging off in the afternoon quietly and modestly to their country villages. I looked on them with pity, and wondered what they thought of this new state of things, and how they liked the intruders whose presence they bore so meekly. I met Mr. Ward, their agent, who treats them as the kindest father would his children, and often went to his house, where Indian parties from a distance were sure to resort for information and advice. When I left Santa Fé I passed through many of their villages, saw them in their house, visited their fields and vineyards, and watched them as they assembled on their housetops at sunrise to look for the coming of Montezuma from the east.

The semi-civilised Indian of the United States is only to be found in New Mexico and Arizona, south of the thirty-sixth parallel of latitude, nor is there any proof whatever but some vague traditions to show

that they ever came from the north, or that they spread further northward than the Rio Grande valley and the accessible branches of the San Juan river. In these two territories—together, equal in size to France—only five small remnants of this once powerful nation remain at the present time. These are:

1. The Pueblo Indians of the Rio Grande valley; population, 5866.

2. The Indians of Zuñi, situated about latitude 35 deg., longitude 108 deg. 50 min., with a population at present of 1200 souls.

3. The Indians of the seven Moqui pueblos, situated about 150 miles north-west of Zuñi; population, 2500.

4. The Pimas of the Gila valley occupy eight villages, and number 3500.

5. The Papago Indians of the region south of it, which occupy about nineteen villages, and number about 4000 in all.

The Pueblo Indians of the Rio Grande valley were early converted to Christianity by the Spanish missionaries. Each pueblo has its church, built of adobe, and dedicated to its patron saint. The following table was furnished me by Mr. Ward, who made an accurate census of the inhabitants of each village. To this I have added the estimate of Lieut. Whipple, taken from Spanish sources. It may have been a tolerably fair one for the early part of this century, and if so, the decrease in population has been very great.

Name of Pueblo.	Patron Saint.	Spanish Statistics.	Mr. Ward's Census, 1866.
1. De Toas	San Geronimo	800	361
2. De Picuries	San Lorenzo	800	122
3. San Juan	De los Caballeros	500	385
4. Santa Clara		600	144
5. San Ildefonso		500	161
6. De Pojuaque	Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe	500	29
7. Nanibé	San Francisco	500	94
8. Tezuque	San Diego	700	101
9. Cochité	San Buenaventurâ	800	229
10. San Domingo		800	604
11. San Felipe		800	427
12. Sandia	Los Dolres de	500	197
13. Isleta	San Agustin de la	800	786
14. Santa Ava		500	298
15. Silla (Zia)	Nuestra de la Assumption de	450	103
16. Jemes	San Diego de	450	346
17. La Laguna	San José de la	800	988
18. Acoma	San Estevan de	1200	491
De Pecos*	Nuestra Señora de los Angelos	135	
De Belen } San Gomas }	Nuestra Señora de Abiquin	132 122	
		12,389	5866

* Population in 1808. The three last-named places are now uninhabited.

Most of the above villages are in the main valley. Others, such as the Pueblos de Toas, Laguna, Acoma, San Domingo, and others, occupy isolated positions on some of the tributary streams. The villages in the Rio Grande valley differ but little from those of the Mexicans, except that the houses are larger and loftier. They are usually of only one story, but each house is able to contain several families; the roofs are flat, and at different corners of the village watch-towers rise above the roofs. In the centre of the chief house in the village, a good-sized room, partly formed by excavation into the earth, is usually to be found. This is the estufa, or place of worship, where the sacred fire was always to be kept burning, and where all religious services used to be held before the Indians became Christians; now it is used in most villages only as a council chamber, but Colonel M'Leod, of Santa Fé, assures me that in some places the sacred fire is still kept burning, and that on one occasion he was permitted to visit an estufa where it still exists. Each pueblo has a separate government of its own, consisting, first, of a cacique, or governor, chosen out of the men advanced in years—the sages, in fact. The cacique holds office for life, he presides over the council, and is chosen for his wisdom. His decisions are usually adopted. Secondly, a war captain is selected from amongst the braves, who arranges all campaigns made against an enemy, and through his lieutenant—or master of the horse, as we should call him—has the management of the nahallada, or horse-herd. Third, the fiscal and his assistants regulate church matters, repair the churches, &c. The old and experienced men collectively are the law-makers, and elect all officers except the cacique, who is chosen by universal suffrage. The people of the villages do not all speak the same tongue, and they resort to the Spanish language, which they speak with tolerable facility as a common medium of communication. The Pueblos form four groups, if classed according to dialects.

1. Pueblo de Toas, de Picuries, Sandia, Isleta.

2. San Juan, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Nanibé de Pojuaque, Tezuque.

3. Cochité, San Domingo, San Felipe, Santa Ava, Silla (Zia), La Laguna, Acoma.

4. Jemes.

The people of Zuñi speak a fifth dialect. Those of the Moqui pueblos speak the same as that of Jemes. The Spanish missionaries

found little difficulty in teaching those natives to read and write, but since the decay of religious establishments education has been arrested, and now not a single school exists in any of the pueblos.

In religion they are, to outward appearance, devoted Roman Catholics; the few priests who still work amongst them are Frenchmen, and are much respected and beloved. The rites of baptism, marriage, and burial take place in the village church, and they keep the feast-day of their patron saint with great festivities.

The isolated pueblos, which lie at considerable distances from the main valley, are very different in appearance from those simpler one-storied villages which once dotted the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte in very considerable numbers. In these the distinctive peculiarities of the native fortifications are very striking. Laguna, on the Rio de San José, is built on the summit of a limestone cliff, some forty feet high, possessing considerable natural advantages for defence. The houses are mostly of stone plastered over with mud, and two stories high. Neither windows nor doors are to be found on the outer wall of the first story; the second rises a little back from the roof of the first, leaving a ledge in front of it. Ladders are used to mount to this ledge; they are then drawn up, and the rooms are entered either by openings in the roof leading to the ground-floor, or doors giving entrance from the ledge to the second suite of rooms; the latter story alone is used for sleeping. Store-rooms occupy the ground-floor.

In 1858 there was a Baptist minister at Laguna; in one of his reports to the Indian department of the Secretary of the Interior, he says that the amount of real Christianity amongst the Indians is very small; they cling to the religion of their forefathers, and can only be induced to attend the service of the Roman Catholic Church by threats, promises, and even, blows, whereas they perform their own religious duties with the utmost regularity. He also joins in the universal eulogium on the honesty and sobriety of the men, and the virtue of the women.

Acoma, some twenty miles west of Laguna, is a large and very interesting pueblo. It rests on the summit of a flat mesa, whose perpendicular cliffs rise to a height of from three hundred to four hundred feet above the valley. The houses here are three stories high, built on the usual principle, each successive story being smaller than that on which it rests. Ladders are also used to reach the first ledge. The flat top of the mesa covers about fifty acres of land; it is reached by a steep winding path cut in the rock, and so placed as to be easily defended. It is a very wealthy pueblo; the Indians owe abundance of cattle, and grow large quantities of corn, peaches, pumpkins, and other produce. The houses of San Domingo, Sandria, and others, although only built of one story, have no doors or windows on the outside, but are entered by ladders from the roof.

The ancient pueblo of Toas consists of one compact fortress, formed of terraces seven stories high, and built on a rock overlooking the stream; so strong was it as a place of defence, that, in 1847, when the Mexicans of the village of Toas could no longer defend themselves against the Americans, they betook themselves to the Indian pueblo a few miles distant, and they sustained a protracted siege, yielding at last, but only when provisions had utterly failed. This pueblo, moreover, was never taken by the Spaniards, although it was many times attacked. Venegas, Caronado, and, in fact, all the early Spanish explorers and writers upon New Mexico, describe many seven-storied fortresses now no more, and give many instances of the great bravery shown by the Indians in their defence. Those I have mentioned, however, with the exception of Zuñi and the seven Moqui pueblos, are the only native fortresses which now remain inhabited.

In the valley through which the Zuñi river (a tributary of the Colorado Chiquito) flows, are to be seen orchards—chiefly of peach-trees—vineyards, fine corn plots, and vegetable gardens, producing onions, beans, melons, chili colorado (red pepper), pumpkins, &c. Formerly cotton was cultivated; probably by Indians, further south; but now, I believe, they obtain what stuffs they require from the Mexicans in exchange for farm produce. They do not raise their crops by irrigation, but depend entirely upon the rainfall; hence all their traditions relate more or less to the production of water. Not far from the town is a sacred spring about eight feet in diameter, walled round with stones, of which neither cattle nor man may drink. The animals sacred to water—frogs, tortoises, and snakes—alone must enter the pool. Once a year the cacique and his attendants perform certain religious rites at the spring; it is thoroughly cleared out; water-pots are brought as an offering to the Spirit of Montezuma, and are placed bottom upwards on the top of the wall of stones. Many of these have been removed, but

some still remain, while the ground around is strewn with fragments of vases which have crumbled into decay from age.

Not far from the present pueblo is a lofty mesa, which rises about a thousand feet perpendicularly from the plain; upon this are many ruins of houses and a sacred altar, constituting all that remains of old Zuñi. The following tradition is related about this place. Long before the first appearance of the white man, a dreadful flood visited the land. Waters gushed forth from the earth, and huge waves rolled in from the west, drowning man and beast; even the wild Apaches and Coyotes did not escape. Then many of the people of Zuñi rushed to the lofty mesa, but many more perished in the waters. Night came, and yet the waters rose higher and higher, until they reached the water-mark still distinctly visible high up on the cliff wall. The great Spirit was very wroth with his people, and must be appeased by a fitting sacrifice. So the son of the cacique and the most beautiful maiden in the tribe were bound and lowered down into the seething flood; then the waves abated, and the remnant of the people were saved. The young man and the maiden were transformed into two lofty pillars of stone, which rise from a natural battlement on one part of the summit. Time has worn these two pillars into four; they are still greatly venerated by the people of Zuñi. After building a town on the lofty mesa, they lived there for many years, but as it was far removed from their fertile bottom-lands, and as no second flood visited their country, they removed to their present abode. When the Spaniards, however, made war against them, they fled for a second time to their ancient stronghold, and, according to their own account, made a fierce resistance, by fortifying the only two approaches by which the summit could be gained, and by hurling huge stones upon their assailants; the enemy, however, was victorious.

Spanish influence was never strong enough at Zuñi to convert the natives to Christianity; they tolerated the presence of a church outside the walls of the pueblo (now a ruin), but they still cling devotedly to their old traditions, and attribute their temporal prosperity, and the comparative immunity of their country from drought, to the steadfast observance of their ancient ceremonies. They believe in the one great Spirit, and in Montezuma his son, who will some day come again to them from the east, and unite all the nations once more under his banner.

Our party found the people of Zuñi to be very honest, but uncommonly sharp traders, so much so that they had the greatest difficulty in buying any sheep from them, although they had flocks in abundance; they parted with their maize and farm produce much more readily, but they understood the value of everything so thoroughly that they always insisted on receiving quid pro quo. They seemed to take great pleasure in keeping tame eagles and turkeys. Albinos are unusually common amongst them, whose complexions are as fair as those of Europeans. Like the other branches of the Pueblo Indians, the women of Zuñi are very chaste, and plurality of wives is not allowed.

Situated to the north-east of the San Francisco Peaks, about twenty miles from the Colorado Chiquito, on the opposite side to the mountains, are grouped, within a radius of seven miles, the seven villages of Moqui. The country is arid and uninviting, much broken and partly formed of steep mesas, partly of volcanic peaks. Upon the very edge of some of these mesas the villages are planted. They are mostly of three stories, built in the form of a square, with a court common to the whole community forming the centre. The first story, or basement, consists of a stone wall fifteen feet high, the top of which forms a landing extending round the whole. A flight of stone steps leads from the first to the second landing, and thence up to the roof. The doors open upon the landing. The houses are three rooms deep; the first being used for eating, cooking, &c.; the others as sleeping apartments; great neatness is observable both in the household arrangements and personal habits of the people. They sit upon skins on the floor, clothe themselves with linen trousers, shirts, and a Navajo blanket thrown across their shoulders. Upon the walls hang bows, arrows, quivers, antlers, blankets, articles of clothing, &c.; vases, flat dishes, and gourds, filled with meal or water, stand usually along one side of the room. In complexion they are rather fair for Indians; although quiet in their manners, they are very light-hearted; honesty, frankness, and hospitality are amongst their good qualities, but they want the manly bearing of the Zuñi Indians, and have, until lately, lived in great fear of their warlike neighbours, the Navajos.

The most interesting features about their villages are the reservoirs which they build to retain the rain water. At the back of the building upon the mesa itself, a good-sized reservoir, some five feet or upwards in depth, and lined throughout with ma-

sonry, is usually to be found; a little lower down is a second one, with a pipe leading to it from the former. This lower reservoir is for the animals, the upper one for the people, and for household use. On each side of the tanks, the sloping sides of the mesa are formed into terraces neatly paved with masonry, and surrounded by a raised edge, so as to retain the water brought to them through pipes from the reservoirs. Peach-trees grow upon the terraces, and most of their crops are raised in this way by carefully husbanding the rainfall and using it for irrigation. Many flocks are owned by them, and most of the sheep are black.

Mr. Leroux, who was the first American to visit them (1850), estimated the united population of the seven villages at six thousand seven hundred, the largest containing two thousand four hundred. Since then, however, small-pox has committed terrible ravages among them, and they have also suffered for several seasons from great deficiency of rainfall; so much so that they have been strongly advised to migrate to some more hospitable region. Within the last six years, however, the rains have been pretty abundant, and by latest reports from that out-of-the-way region, they seem to be in a very flourishing condition; Mr. Ward, however, after a careful inspection of the different communities, places the present population at only two thousand five hundred souls.

The next group of semi-civilised Indians —the Pimas of the Rio Gila—differ from those I have already named, in that they inhabit huts instead of houses. In all other respects they are very similar.

After the Rio Gila has emerged from the succession of deep gorges through which it crosses the Pina-leno Cordilleras, it waters a rich and fertile valley forty or fifty miles long, between the mountains and the Gila desert. About twenty miles of this valley is occupied by these people. They devote themselves entirely to agriculture and to the arts of peace, but they are brave in war, and maintain a complete military organisation, for protection against the incursions of their wild neighbours the Apaches. I have often heard it said by western men, that there are only two spots in New Mexico and Arizona in which you can be certain of absolute safety; the one is in the pueblo of Zuñi, the other amongst the Pimas on the Rio Gila. Both these peaceful tribes have been most useful allies of the United States' troops in their expeditions against the Navajos and Apaches; it has indeed, been only through the assistance of the Pima warriors that any success has ever been gained against the latter sons of plunder.

The valley varies in width from two to four miles, and grouped up and down the stream, usually on ground a little above the level of the low-lying bottom-lands, are seen the cone-shaped huts which compose the villages. These huts are easily built, as they only consist of a framework of willow poles stuck in the ground, and arched over to meet in the centre; these are interlaced with others at right angles, and then covered with wheat-straw neatly pinned down all round the sides, which may or may not be daubed over with mud, and is nicely thatched at the top.

Were we to judge only from their dwellings, we should place these people very low down in the list of Indian tribes; but when we examine the means which they adopt for raising their crops; when we see with what labour and skill they have divided off their lands into little patches of about two hundred feet square, and have dug many miles of irrigating canals, each set radiating from the main arteries, or "acequia madre," to supply every patch; then when we look at the pottery, the beautiful baskets woven so closely of willow chips and grass that they are quite impervious to water; the stores of farm produce carefully packed away in well-made storehouses; when we see specimens of native weaving, and perhaps more than all, when we look at the soft intelligent faces of these Indians, we recognise directly the same people to all intents and purposes as we met in the Rio Grande valley.

The most complete list of the population I have been able to discover is that of Mr. G. Bailey, Indian agent for the Pimas and Maricopas, dated 1858. It is as follows:

PIMAS.

Name of Village.	Warriors.	Women and Children.	Total.
Buen Llano	132	259	391
Ormejera, No. 1.	140	503	643
„ No. 2.	37	175	212
Casa Blanca.....	110	425	535
Chemisez	102	210	312
El Juez Farado ...	105	158	263
Arizo del Aqua ...	235	535	770
Aranca	291	700	991
	1152	2965	4117

MARICOPAS.

Name of Village.	Warriors.	Women and Children.	Total.
El Juez Farado ...	116	198	314
Sacatou.....	76	128	204
	192	326	518

The Maricopas, or Co-co-Maricopas, as they are also called, are the remains of a small tribe of Indians which formerly occupied the land about the junction of the Gila and the Colorado; being too few to hold their own amongst the larger tribes of the latter river, they were forced to retire up the Gila, until at last they crossed the Gila desert, and asked the Pimas to allow them to settle with them on their lands. To this request the Pimas consented, and now the only difference to be recognised between them is a moral one. Unchastity in a Pima woman is very rare indeed, but the licentiousness so common amongst the Colorado tribes is still characteristic of the Maricopas.

The Pimas are rather short in stature, darker and less manly in appearance than the Zuñians, and wear, as a rule, less clothes, because they inhabit a much warmer climate. A cotton kilt, or breech-cloth, with gaiters and moccasins, is usually the working attire for both sexes, but in the evening the cotton blanket is thrown gracefully over the shoulders, and sometimes fastened with a band round the waist. Besides these simple native garments, they will wear any cast-off clothes which can be obtained from passing travellers; and since intercourse with the outer world has become general, the slow and laborious process of making homespun cloth formerly practised by them has been discontinued. The women are stronger and more robust than the men, probably because they do more work. They grind the corn by a slow process of rubbing it between two stones, the larger of which—the metate—is grooved for that purpose; they hoe the ground, carry most of the burdens, gather mezquite beans from the neighbouring hills, make baskets and pottery, and occasionally weave and spin, in addition to taking care of the children and household matters. The men attend to the acequia madre common to all, gather in the crops, look after the stock, protect the settlements, and do most of the idling.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. PADSTOW TO REDRUTH.

Between Wadebridge and St. Columb, the crow finds a small stone cross, six miles from Padstow. It was here that, in February, 1840, a Mr. Norway was murdered by two brothers named Lightfoot. The footpads were hung at Bodmin, and confessed their crime in all its details. It was considered an extraordinary and miraculous case of presentiment, that the very evening of the murder, the murdered man's brother—chief officer of the Orient, then seven miles N.N.W. of St. Helena—dreamt that he saw the murder perpetrated, observing all its details, except that a house which he well knew to be on the right of the high road, seemed to stand on the left. Now, really, soberly looked at, this story has nothing wonderful about it. A superstitious naval officer, in the evening, on a lonely sea, dreaming of home and his brother—of the dangers of his journeys in wild places, of his possible murder by footpads amongst such wild places, thinks of the specially wild two-mile stone on the road towards St. Columb. Who is there that tells his dreams if they do not come true? There is much more that is difficult to explain in the true and singular story of the Cornish gentleman who dreamt of Perceval's murder, and some time afterwards, going to London, found, to his surprise and almost horror, that the assassin in his dream exactly resembled in dress and features the maniac Bellingham. There had been nothing to prompt that dream, except, perhaps, some vague political anxiety of a Tory partisan for the statesman's life in those troublous times of Luddite riots, general distress, and discontent.

Near St. Columb the crow takes care not to flap his sooty wings too fast over the wooded Carnantow, once the home of that mischievous old lawyer, attorney-general Roy, who revived the odious and tyrannical tax of ship money, till Hampden punctured the legal bubble, and it burst. The old parchment-coloured pedant used to say dryly that his house had no fault save one, it was too near to London. The beautiful valley of Lanherne stretches from St. Columb to the sea-shore and, up the coast the crow catches in perspective the groves of Carnantow, the nunnery of Lanherne, and the old church tower of Mawgan embowered among small-leafed Cornish elms. In the churchyard of St. Mawgan (three miles from St. Columb) there is a memorial of death which is essentially Cornish. It is the stern of a shattered boat, painted white, which preserves the memory of ten poor fishermen, who, on a bitter winter's night in 1846, were drifted ashore in this boat, frozen to death.

It is the fine granite cliffs around Mawgan and Bodrothan steps that that very pleasant artist Mr. Hook delights to paint. The cliff tops bedded with cushions of sea pink, the twenty miles of purple cliffs, the golden and silver sands, the emerald crescents of the bays, the fantastic caverns hollowed for the mermaids, the strange blow holes where the sea spouts like an angry whale, he has painted with a true Englishman's love of ocean; but he must not sink into small mannerism, for there is half England still to paint. At Newquay, not far from that great double entrenched earth-fort of King Arthur's Castle an Dinas, there is a change going on which seems to explain the construction of all the sandstone in England, and that is the consolidation of sand rocks from blown sand by the infiltration of water holding iron in solution.

A flight further westward, and the crow touches at Truro, in the pleasant valley where

two streams join the inlet of the sea, that here comes to fetch them. The Earls of Cornwall (dearest Regan was wife to Cornwall) had a castle here, which stood on a scarped mound at the left top of Pydar-street. Everywhere the crow sees paper mills, iron foundries, or smelting houses, for Truro was one of the old coinage towns for tin, and in the old coinage hall, now pulled down, the vice-warden of the Stannary's held his rugged court, as he now does in the handsome Italian town hall, whenever questions occur in Wheal Rose, Wheal Garras, Ding-Dong, or even the great Botallac.

Truro is the birthplace of that heartless satirist and utterly unsatisfactory man Foote, of Polwhele, the Cornish historian, and of Richard and John Lander, Clapperton's servants, and the earliest explorers of the river Niger. Two great missionaries were also natives of Truro; Henry Martyn, the son of a miner, who spread Christianity in so many parts of India and who died of the plague in Persia in 1812, and Dr. Harreis, the founder of the London Missionary Society. But the chief lion of Truro, to the crow's taste, is Perranzabuloe, the church of St. Piran in the Sand. St. Piran, worthy soul, takes us back to those days when St. Patrick drove out all the vermin of Ireland except the middlemen and the agitators, and the Culdees taught christianity at Iona. At the end of the fourth century St. Patrick visited Cornwall to preach against the Druids, and being successful in discomfiting the gods of the oak tree and the thunder, returned to Ireland, consecrated a batch of twelve bishops, and started them off to complete the good work. St. Piran, more zealous and eager than the rest, pushed off, first crossed the sea on a milestone, landed at St. Ives, walked eighteen miles to stretch his legs, and then founded an oratory at Piran among the miners of St. Agnes, who still consider him their guardian, and annually fête him on the 5th of March. The Piran church was built over the dead body of the miners' saint. The church, used for the prayer and praise of two centuries, was submerged by sand before the Saxons overran Cornwall. The second church was in all probability then built, and protected from the devouring sand by a stream of water which arrested its advance as if by enchantment. In 1420 (Henry the Fifth) the church was rebuilt and continued safe till some miners diverted the stream, and the sand again pressed on so rapidly that the porch was buried in a single night. The building was removed in 1803 to a place two miles off. The tradition of the primeval church was still flickering in men's memories, when in 1855 the great region of sand suddenly shifted, disclosed glimpses of stone work, and at last gave birth to the old oratory, with its little baptistry. After a quiet doze of ten centuries the church awoke again, and opened its eyes, like Rip van Winkle, to find the outer world somewhat altered. The rude masonry of granite blocks embedded not in lime, but china clay, the few windows, the peculiar curve of the doorway arch, the absence of a font, are all proofs of Celtic origin and great antiquity. It was built, says Mr. Haslam, evidently by persons who had seen Roman work without understanding it, and seen lime without knowing how to make it. The altar was taken down in 1855, and the headless body of the worthy saint found beneath it. Thirty years of travellers' visits have done more to ruin this early relic of Christianity, than did all the harmless ten centuries of its interment. The south and east walls have partly fallen, the sand is again closing over the victim that once escaped it. In the winter, the spring of St. Piran, the course being choked with sand, forms a large pool, and overflows the persecuted building of the missionary who first taught the miners to work tin, to the height of six feet. To the south of this mine a solitary moorstone cross, pierced with cruciform holes, marks the site of the second church. The sand around it is partially fixed with grass, but it still covers the floor of the ruin to the depth of nineteen feet. North and south, sand can be seen blowing over the hills in whirling clouds. Around both churches the desert soil is white with human bones, the heaving graves having from time to time given up their dead. When the west wind blows on this coast, as Mr. Redding observes, the sand can be seen advancing in small waves. All the sand that destroyed Perranzabuloe was blown in through a small crevice in the cliff. A few yards of shore wall built in time would have saved the whole district. In this paradise of rabbits, the arundo arenaria, planted to bind the desultory mass, sometimes a species of convolvulus, and a starveling mossy vegetation in the hollows, are the only signs of life.

About a mile and a half from this strange spot, the crow alights on Perran Round, an equally interesting place, but with very different associations. It is the old open-air theatre, where the Cornish miracle plays used to be performed. There is an amphitheatre at St. Just with stone seats, but this is of turf. It is calculated that the seven rows of benches here held about two thousand two hundred persons, standing. In the Bodleian there are still preserved four of these Cornish religious interludes, the subjects—the Creation, the Passion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. One of these is of the time of James the First; another is supposed to be as old as Richard the Third. In the Creation there were fifty-six characters. The play ends with the building of Solomon's Temple, the king's workmen being rewarded by a bishop with Cornish estates. In the (James the First) Creation, Adam and Eve appear dressed in white leather. The serpent had a woman's face, with yellow hair, and entered a tree and sang. In one scene the good and evil angels fought with swords, and in the last act Lamech shoots Cain in mistake for a wild beast, and devils appear and carry off the first murderer. The stage directions require an ark to be built, and a rainbow to appear. At these plays—which almost exactly resembled those miracle plays still performed in the Tyrol, and one of which was

described in one of our recent numbers*—the orchestra sat in a pit on one side of the lower circle, and hell was represented by another hollow in the area.

Four miles from Perranzabuloe rises St. Agnes Beacon, six hundred feet from the sea level, and famous for the clay which the miners all over Cornwall use for the candlesticks in their hats. During the French war signalmen were stationed here beside a bonfire, ready to rouse the northern coast.

The crow is now so near either coast in this promontory of England that he can dart across with a few flaps of his wings to Fowey. This fishing town, on a hill overlooking an estuary environed by woody hills, was an energetic seaport in the reign of Edward the Third, to whose Calais-bound fleet it contributed forty-seven ships and seven hundred and seventy men; while Plymouth sent but twenty-six, and London only twenty-five. The "Fowey gallants," as they were called, grew at last so proud and aspiring, that they refused "to vail their bonnets" when passing Rye and Winchelsea, and when the cinque ports seamen launched out to enforce their right, flew at them, drubbed them, and drove them back into harbour. They grew so aggressive in Henry the Sixth's reign on the French coast that the Frenchmen fitted out a secret expedition, landed at midnight, and fired the wasps' nest of a town. The brave Cornishmen then retreated to Place House, which they defended; and eventually chased back the invaders to their ships. In Edward the Fourth's time the daring of the Fowey people degenerated into piracy, and the men of Dartmouth were ordered to confiscate their ships. The spirited little town never recovered this blow to its pride. The entrance to the harbour was, in Henry the Eighth's time, guarded by forts and a chain, a few links of which have been dredged up by fishermen. In the reign of Charles the Second the plucky little place saved a fleet of our merchantmen, and with its fort guns drove back a Dutch line-of-battle ship that was swooping at our vessels. In 1644 the Parliamentarian army surrendered here to the king, and Essex stole away by sea to Plymouth.

Hill-throned Redruth next for the crow, in its dreary country of copper mines, with steam pumping engines pulsing and stamping, and wheels turning, and metal carting off for the Swansea vessels. Underground, at a depth equal to five times the height of St. Paul's, swart Cornish men are busy with their picks and blasting powder. One mile off in the desolate country is Gwennap pit, the subsidence of a disused mine in the side of Carn Marth. This is the pit where Wesley, in the days of his persecutions, upheld by his love of God and his love of power, preached to thirty thousand rough miners. Though growing old at the time, his voice was distinctly heard by every one present. He was now seventy, yet his eyes were still keen and his nerves strong. A toilsome life had turned him into steel. He attributed his health to rising for fifty years at four A.M., to preaching at five in the morning, to never travelling less than four thousand five hundred miles in a year, and never losing a night's sleep in his life. Two violent fevers and two deep consumptions, he said, had been his rough but useful medicines. "Ten thousand cares were no more oppression to him than so many hairs to his head." The Wesleyans still hold their Whit Monday anniversary in this consecrated pit. There is no doubt that, with all the dangers of Revivalism, Wesley did vast good in Cornwall; for before he came the fishermen were wreckers who never prayed but for a good storm to bring grist to their unhallowed mill, and the drunken miners believed in nothing but the Knockers, those lying spirits that led them in their search for copper. Cornwall, before his time, well deserved the name it had obtained of "West Barbary."

Carr Brea, a hill near Redruth, was, as Borlase fondly believed, the cathedral of the Cornish Druids. There is an old castle on the summit, now spoiled by modern fantasy. Near this Borlase found, or thought he found, sacred circles, pools of lustration, logans, and seats of judgment. All these rock basins and balanced stones are really only the result of time, that has sifted out the looser earth and left the harder strata bare to weather. Carr Brea, the giant, is a great man in Cornish legend, for here he threw granite blocks at the Devil, and he is now supposed to lie buried beneath the hill with one hand still emerging from the surface. The hand is apparently a granite block chopped into five gigantic fingers.

* The Passion Play at Brixlegg, vol. xx, page 397.

MELUSINA.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

No portion of that widely scattered empire of which little England fulfils the functions of heart and brain, is richer in nature's gifts than that which, not many years ago, was the scene of an actual life-drama as extraordinary as ever put romance to shame.

Severed by many a league of glistening sea from the maternal bosom, this singular spot suggests the image of a beautiful wilful child, who, thrust in sudden anger from its natural home, and, finding a place under alien skies, surrounds itself with conditions and characteristics that have little in common with its former life, without losing the energy and independent spirit which were its true inheritance.

Golden Isle—I cannot give it its legitimate name—possesses a climate and seasons, habits, laws, and language of its own. Somewhat difficult and dangerous of access, it has less intercommunication with the general family of mankind than any

civilised spot upon the map of earth. Bold sea-rovers who would smoke the pipe of calmness in the teeth of the wildest Biscayan gale, look askance at Golden Isle. If approach they must, the glass is never from the captain's hand, nor the line from the leadsman's. From time to time some intrepid yacht makes a summer snatch at this sea-cherry, and is off again at the full stretch of her white pinions. The very steamboat captains—those hardly sufficiently recognised heroes of modern navigation—pretend to nothing, guarantee nothing, predicate nothing, in relation to their goings and returnings to and fro the Isle of Gold.

But for such as do set foot on its blest shores, what a scene of lavish glory is prepared! Cliffs pearl white to ruby-red, passemented with rich sea-green growths and streaked with gleaming sulphur, compose the fairy battlements which open upon a prospect to which no attribute of picturesque beauty seems wanting; and for those who weary of the silver sands and deep limpid pools, peopled (so say the divers, but at twenty fathoms deep the imagination grows lively) with creatures strange and lovely—for these, hill and valley, lake and lawn, moorland and forest, are ready to recal the fairest features of the mother land.

Distempered minds have fastened upon one supposed defect in the Golden Isle—*fogs!* Pshaw! If a pure silvery gauze that, like a bride's veil, tempers, not conceals, the bewildering beauty underneath, and, when it rises, leaves, as in queenly compensation, a separate diamond on every leaf and flower—if this be fog, granted. To us, it is a mist of the mind, a fog of the fancy!

In the Golden Isle the birds and butterflies are more richly hued, the fruits larger (for we put aside as worthless the dropsical apples and turgid pears, skilfully swollen by hydraulic means for the Paris market), and the flora more varied and vivid than in any land beyond the tropics. Africa herself might be suspected of a slender brown finger in that glorious pie.

British as to her allegiance, the prevailing language of the isle is French. The greater portion of the resident families are of Breton origin, and many a great old name, smacking of history, may be met with, not only in connexion with the stately country seat and wide demesne, but modestly crowning the portal of some small store or wayside inn.

As a rule, estates run small in the Golden Isle, most proprietors contenting themselves with comparative strips of paradise, and eschewing the dignity, and therewith the care, of wide dominion. Hence "hall," "towers," "park," and "abbey" are rarely found; while endearing and fantastic titles, such as "Mon Loisir," "Mon Port," "Mon Bonheur," "Mon Rève," &c., culminating in "Mon Vœu Suprème," are familiar as hazel nuts in August. Among these—misnamed, alas!—lie the incidents of my strange sinister story.

Persons are yet living who can remember the arrival in the island of a retired Indian officer, Colonel Fonnereau, and the purchase by that gentleman of the beautiful villa and grounds of "Mon Désir." He had possessed considerable property in one of the West India Islands, but, on the death of his wife, resolved to relinquish it, and, sending his only child, a daughter, to Europe for the advantage of climate and education, followed himself as soon as his affairs permitted. Colonel Fonnereau was still but forty-five, in the prime of health and vigour. When it is mentioned that to the dignity and self-possession of the soldier he added a noble person, gentle disposition, and winning manners, it will surprise no one to learn that his settling down in that pleasant locality was a welcome circumstance in the neighbourhood, the satisfaction being enhanced when, her cage being at length opened, his bright little bird, Geraldine, flew back to the paternal nest. She had been, for eighteen months, a boarder in a French convent in the isle; but the period had been far from a painful one. She had been the solace and delight of the kind sisters, and the tears her father wiped away were not *all* for the joy of that coveted reunion.

Geraldine, though hardly fourteen, was advanced for her age, and ripening fast towards a beauty that promised to be marvellous. Her father, despite his own secret preconceived opinion as to her personal gifts, stood perfectly amazed at the change so short a period had effected, and held her from him for a moment in fond but well concealed exultation.

"Papa! papa! what *is* the matter?" asked Geraldine at length.

"Why, what great gaunt thing is this they send me back?" said the delighted father, forcing a frown, "with a great touzle of hair, and—and——My darling!"

The "touzle" was spread upon the colonel's broad chest like a corslet of gold.

The business of settling themselves in

their beautiful abode was a new delight to Geraldine. Proud of her position as mistress of such a mansion, busy as fifty bees, she devoted herself entirely to her household cares, and with these and her father, whom she adored, would have been fully content. But the colonel liked society; society liked *him*—would have him; and, in effect, a period of five or six months saw him and his daughter established as chief favourites in the district of which "Mon Désir" was the centre; while the fame of Miss Fonnereau's beauty knew no limits short of those of the Golden Isle itself.

Among the Golden Islanders no institution enjoys a greater popularity than the "pic-nic." It was on their return from one of these that the father and daughter sat talking over the incidents of the day, and exchanging confidences as to their mutual impressions. These were, as usual, tolerably harmonious; Geraldine being, however, especially frank in her praises of a certain old Admiral Brunton, who had, it must be owned, availed himself of his seventy summers to flirt, in the most open and unscrupulous manner, with his beautiful young neighbour.

"By the way," remarked the colonel, "there was another of the cloth—tall, curly-headed fellow—Hal—Hul—Huddleman."

"'Hal-di-mand,'" said his daughter, distinctly.

"If he had broken his neck in getting at those orchids," observed the colonel, calmly, "it would have been a kind of treason. The lives and energies of the royal navy are not intended for the supply of a girl's 'hortus siccus.' You should have stopped him, pussy."

"I tried, indeed, papa; but—but he *would*——"

She checked herself, as if conscious of the slight colour that had mounted to her cheeks.

"Hey?" said the colonel, looking at her.

But Geraldine laughed lightly, and her father forgot the blush. Moreover, the next moment he found himself on the defensive.

"By the way, dear," said Geraldine, slyly, laying her golden head on her father's arm and looking up in his face, "there was also a lady present—tall, slender, long dark ringlets, greenish eyes—Min—Mar—what was her name? Papa, don't pretend; you *must* know; you talked together for two hours."

"For two hours, say twenty minutes, and that by snatches," said the colonel. "She was pretty—she was certainly pretty. I am not sure whether I like her or not. *Do* I?" (with an expression as if really seeking information). "At all events, she puzzled me. I returned to her again and again, as to a riddle one must guess or be haunted with. Whence did she come? Who invited her? In short, who the deuce is she?"

"Don't say deuce,. papa," said Geraldine, holding up a warning finger. "Now, what will you give me to tell you?"

"A pledge that she shall become my pussy's friend."

Geraldine lifted her head.

"Hush, papa. Don't say that, even in joke." Her pale face showed that she at least was in earnest.

"Geraldine, my darling! What is the matter?" asked her father, anxiously.

"Nothing—nothing, dear. I—I cannot explain what I said, or meant to say. Only, I would rather not have this lady for a friend."

"But who and what is she, my child?" persisted the colonel, his curiosity excited. "Who told you about her?"

"Nobody—that is, Admiral Brunton," replied the young lady.

"Complimentary," observed her sire.

"I mean, papa, I heard him talking of her; and you know he does not speak in whispers. He might have been on his own quarter-deck, hailing somebody, 'Ahoy! maintop there! It's Mrs. Magniac—Mrs. Melusina Magniac. She hails from Mon Port in the Dell; and a very pretty haven it is for a sweet little buccaneer, armed and fitted for a cruise, to lie in wait in. Let the single craft look about them.' That's what he said, or roared; and you might have heard him too, dear; but you were in action with the suspected vessel itself."

"Humph!" said the colonel, thoughtfully. "Magniac. I don't remember the name. Well, well, enough of the lady. But she is a stranger, my love; and we must always be on our guard——"

"Yes—yes, papa!"

"Against unfounded prejudices, I was about to say," observed her father, gravely.

Geraldine got up, and placed herself before him.

"Papa, dear, answer. Are we not happy together?"

"As love-birds, pussy," laughed her father, touching her dimpled cheek. "So we intend to be, until the time—a long way off, I hope—when some thief will

come and steal away my pet, my puss, and leave me weeping alone."

"Papa," said Geraldine, "a bargain. *I'll* never marry, if *you* won't."

"Nonsense, pet," said the colonel.

"Papa, come here." (She drew him towards a mirror that reflected their figures, full length.) "What do you see?"

"A tall gaunt old gentleman, with scant grizzled locks and a scar on his left cheek-bone," replied the modest colonel (he might have added, with truth, with a feeble expression about the handsome mouth that belied the stately carriage).

"You see, papa," said Geraldine, indignantly, "what *I* see—a glory of a man! as good as he is handsome, as brave as he is good—a dear loving papa, who believes his silly puss wise enough to choose her own way of happiness, and that is to remain always — yes, always — with him, and minister to *his*."

Her father turned, and clasped her to his heart. But he made no other answer.

As the colonel, in his early canter next morning, passed through the neighbouring village, a thought struck him. He pulled up at the door of Monsieur Hyppolite Meritort (called by the English customers Merrythought), barber and gossip agent of the district. Gentlemen shaved, gentlemen partly shaved, and gentlemen waiting to be shaved, were abandoned to Madame Meritort and the assistant, and the barber came bustling forth, The colonel gave him some unimportant order, then carelessly added:

"Mon Port, I hear, has got a tenant."

"An excellent one, my colonel," said the little barber, rubbing his hands; "a lady beautiful, rich, owning we know not what of rents, to trade a benevolence, to the poor an angel of pity. Already madame has commanded twelve silk dresses from our neighbour, Mademoiselle Brefcomte, and soup at discretion, all the Saturdays, for the poor."

"Ah!" said the colonel, pondering. "Soup, eh? and silk? Meritort," he added, "it is not my habit to ask questions about my neighbours; still, I have reasons for wishing to know something of this lady. My daughter——"

M. Meritort could not say from whence she had come. The question had been pointedly put to madame's maid (that so remarkable person, who would have been a negro, only that she was white), and the singular answer returned was—what?

"De la mer."

"Aha! A mermaid!" laughed the colonel.

Monsieur Hyppolite respectfully copied the laugh.

"It is possible. Monsieur knows that the baptismal name of madame is Melusina."

Colonel Fonnereau remembered having read of those "monstres bizarres," described by the old French mariners as at once terrible and attractive—ferocious and love-inspiring—and acknowledged, in his own mind—that there were not wanting features of resemblance. He nodded to the little barber, and rode on.

"A siren—with a white nigger for lady's maid! The enigma thickens," thought the colonel. "I must see more of this lady of the sea. Good to the poor, eh? A sympathetic nature. There is something strangely appealing in her face. Seems to have known sorrow. Perhaps the deceased merman was a scamp—drank, or flirted with other sea-belles. Inexcusable, with a si-belle wife of his own!" (The colonel smiled at his own infant pun.) "By Jove, there she *is!*"

He had arrived nearly opposite a little cottage, from the door of which, at that moment, issued a female figure. In spite of a very homely dress, the colonel at once recognised Mrs. Magniac. She paused, shyly, concealing something under her cotton shawl, and seemed disposed to let him pass; but Fonnereau, quickly alighting, greeted and shook hands with her. Now, for the first time, he scrutinised her countenance. She appeared to him about twenty-six or twenty-seven. A brighter complexion, more perfect brows, whiter teeth, could hardly be conceived. Silk could not rival her glossy hair. Her large hazel eyes certainly had a gleam in them, which might be pronounced green; but there burst from them, at intervals, a lustre little short (the gazer thought) of supernatural.

That she was a singularly beautiful woman, the colonel felt it would be insane to deny; and, as she tripped along by his side, closing up to him occasionally with a pretty terror of that rare and redoubtable animal, the horse, he took himself severely to task for having affected any doubt at all upon the subject. As to her humble dress, which, somehow, sat upon her exquisite figure like robes upon a queen, she laughingly apologised:

"La Pareuse (my maid) scolds me dreadfully, I assure you, for going out 'that figure,' but what would you have? One

cannot play sick nurse in a lace mantilla. I must give up my poor or my silks, my finery or my flannel." And she allowed him to see that she carried under her shawl a roll of the latter material, together with an empty soup-jug. The colonel volunteered to relieve her of the interesting burden, but this she would not allow.

They became great friends in that short walk. Mrs. Magniac was enthusiastic in her admiration of the kind neighbours who had hastened, from all sides, to cheer her solitude, and, with a clever and graceful compliment to the beauty of Miss Fonnereau, sealed her conquest of the colonel's goodwill. At parting, it was agreed that Mon Port and Mon Désir should henceforth live in close alliance; and the colonel, as he trotted homeward, resolved to do battle with his daughter's prejudice, and overcome all her hesitations, as he had his own.

In this he partially succeeded. Geraldine loved her father too fondly to offer persistent opposition to anything he might desire. Moreover, though possessing a rather high and haughty spirit, she was frank and generous by nature; and, acknowledging to herself that her repugnance towards Mrs. Magniac had, as yet, no rational foundation, concealed, if she could not discard it.

Intercourse now became frequent, the colonel and his daughter riding over, and dropping anchor in Mon Port for hours together. Wealth, and a refined taste, were plainly traceable in all the appointments of that charming residence, while its sweet and simple mistress was fascination itself. Her delight in Geraldine's beauty was almost infantine. She would gaze upon her, as if spell-bound. Her manner, always graceful and cordial, became absolutely fond, and poor Geraldine had many a twinge of conscience, in remembering that her mistrust and aversion, in relation to the Lady of the Sea, had not abated one atom.

On one occasion, Mon Port having to undergo some necessary repairs, Mrs. Magniac, at the instance of the colonel, seconded, with less entreaty, by his daughter, passed several days at Mon Désir. She was accompanied by her remarkable attendant, La Pareuse.

The attachment of this creature to her mistress knew no bounds. It resembled a monomania. She appeared never to be happy, never commonly at ease, out of her presence. It was with difficulty she was prevented, while at Mon Désir, bivouacking at night outside her lady's chamber door. In a word, this strange woman, as singular in aspect as in mind (for she was in all respects, except in colour, a genuine negro, her complexion being of a ghastly bluish white), had, to all appearance, no voluntary being, her thought, will, conscience, aims, being thoroughly absorbed in, and yielded up to, that world—her mistress. But her great delight was the latter's toilette. La Pareuse would dress and deck her, as if the very lives of both depended on the final result. Mrs. Magniac had to apologise for the time expended in this manner, and for the foible of her maid.

"I am nothing but a great big doll, am I?" she would say, blushing and smiling, as she swam into the drawing-room, perfected to a hair.

It would have been idle to deny that art had a good deal to do with the matter. La Pareuse was of unsocial disposition, and, in the absence of her mistress from the house, generally locked herself up in her own room. Grinding, splashing, and gurgling had been heard within, and it was rumoured in the kitchen that the white nigger was concocting mysterious washes, &c., for the enhancement and perpetuation of the beauty she held so dear.

This was no time of tranquillity to Geraldine. She saw, with bitter regret—saw far more distinctly than the colonel himself—the tendency of Melusina's wiles, and their growing influence upon his mind. In proportion as the possibility of her father's union with this woman became more defined, so did her distrust and detestation become more difficult to veil. More than once, in conversation with the siren, she had suffered words to escape her which should have betrayed to the latter the dread of such a result. The Lady of the Sea only redoubled her smiles and caresses, and but that Geraldine detected and captured a telltale glance of confident triumph, she might have brought herself to believe Mrs. Magniac guiltless of any ulterior aim. This one fatal look sufficed. Nor did it express only the exultation of success. There was in it entire consciousness of the antagonism with which she had to deal.

Overcome with her misgivings, Miss Fonnereau resolved to sound her father on the subject, hoping yet to stem the current of his fancy.

To her unspeakable comfort, the colonel laughed heartily, and, pinching her cheek, requested her to banish all suspicion that Mon Désir was to receive any other mistress than herself.

Melusina might have been astonished at the increased kindness and geniality on the part of her young hostess that day. Perhaps she suspected the cause. We only know that she dressed and smiled more bewitchingly than ever, and that the confident glance reappeared.

Things were in this position, when two misfortunes, occurring almost simultaneously, exercised a most injurious effect upon Colonel Fonnereau's affairs. The agent to whom he had delegated authority to complete the sale of his West India property speculated with the purchase money, failed, and fled to Australia. A financial company, also, in which the colonel held a serious stake, became involved in a manner to entail very heavy losses upon the shareholders. Colonel Fonnereau found it necessary to raise a large sum of money, larger, in fact, than he had securities to cover, and soon his altered manner, and the gloomy lines in his heretofore kind and pleasant face, bore sad testimony to his increasing anxieties.

It was in these darker days that the genuine kindness of Mrs. Magniac shone most conspicuously forth. With the deepening trouble her attachment to father and daughter only increased. Geraldine, despite herself, could not but be grateful for a sympathy so manifestly disinterested, and for the comfort it afforded her father.

The latter soon began to revive. His letters seemed to give him more satisfaction. His smiles came back. He openly announced that a great load had been removed from his mind, and matters resumed pretty much their usual course, except that Mrs. Magniac —her consoling presence being no longer required—discontinued her visits, and now seldom or ever quitted Mon Port. The confidence between Geraldine and her father, which had been a little chilled, seemed fully re-established, and all was going merrily, when, one morning, a strange piece of news arrived.

A vulgar process, known as an "execution," had been put into Mon Port! The bewitching tenant was ruined!

This was no moment to desert the lonely woman. The colonel mounted his horse, and never drew rein till he reached Mon Port.

He was absent the whole of the day.

When he did return, his haggard look and disturbed demeanour struck Geraldine with terror.

"Papa, papa! what has happened?" she exclaimed, as she fell upon his neck, in tears.

Her father assured her, affectionately, that she should at once know all (that sinister "all," preface to so many a tale of imprudence and of sorrow), and, placing her by his side, commenced the painful story.

From this Geraldine learned that the recent improvement in her father's affairs had been due to the generosity of Mrs. Magniac, who had, in her seductive manner, pressed upon her embarrassed neighbour the use of a very large sum of money, of which, she positively assured him, she had no present need. It was a little fraud of that description popularly styled "pious." She had herself borrowed the money! The fears of her creditors had become excited. Advantage had been taken of some informality, and she was called upon to refund the money. In doing so she had been reduced to the condition of her own cherished poor.

At this point the colonel paused. His colour brightened. He glanced at his child in a tender, troubled way. It was clear that the "all" was not yet told; and Geraldine knew instinctively that the worst was to come. The colonel's lip quivered, but he dashed at it like a man. *Why* had Mrs. Magniac done this? "Why?" Her agitation had betrayed the secret she would have given worlds to conceal. *She loved him!*

There was no need of other words—no need of her father adding that he was in no position to return the loan—that, whatever might be his own secret feeling, there was but one mode of reparation at his command. Their home must become *hers*—its master also . . . and his darling must forgive him. Yes, the Woman of the Sea had won!

The colonel's darling *did* forgive him. More than that. With all the fervour of her brave young heart she strove to reconcile herself to the change, and to love—if she *could*—the being she had hitherto detested.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read on Tuesdays, April 27, May 11, and 25, at St. James's Hall, London.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XI. WEDNESDAY'S POST.

LORD HETHERINGTON was a powerful man, who had great influence in most things, but he could not get his letters delivered at Westhope before eleven o'clock. Not that he had not tried. He had, as he expressed it, "put on all kinds of screws," but he could not manage it, and if he had had to wait for the regular delivery by the walking postman it would have been much later. A groom, however, always attended at the nearest post-town on the arrival of the London mail, and rode over with the Westhope letter-bag, which was unlocked by the butler, and its contents distributed. There was never much curiosity or anxiety about letters exhibited at Westhope, at least amongst the members of the family. Of course young visitors had occasional faint flutterings of interest about a certain portion of their correspondence, but they were too true to the teachings of their order to allow any vulgar signs of excitement to be visible; while the letters received by Lord and Lady Hetherington were too uniformly dull to arouse the smallest spark of emotion in the breast of any one, no matter how excitably inclined. Lady Caroline Mansergh's correspondence was of a different kind. A clever woman herself, she was in the habit of writing to, and receiving letters from, clever people, but they simply contained gossip and small-talk, which might be read at any time, and which, while pleasant and amusing when taken in due course, did not invite any special eagerness for its acquisition. In a general way, Lady Caroline was quite content to have her letters brought to her in whatever room she might happen to be, but on this Wednesday morning she was seated at the window as the post-bag-bearing groom came riding up the avenue, and a few minutes afterwards she stepped out into the hall, where the butler had the letters out on the table before him, and ran her eye over them.

There it was! that plain, square letter, addressed to him in the firm, plain hand, and bearing the Brocksopp postmark! There it was, his life-verdict, for good or ill. Nothing to be judged of it by its appearance—firm, square, and practical; no ridiculous tremors occasioned by hope or fear could have had anything to do with such a sensible-looking document. What was in it? She would have given anything to know! Not that she seemed to be in the least anxious about it. She had asked where he was, and had been told that he was at work in the library. He was so confident of what Miss Ashurst's answer would be, that he awaited its arrival in the most perfect calmness. Would he be undeceived? Lady Caroline thought not just yet. If the young woman were, as Lady Caroline suspected, playing a double game, she would probably find some excuse for not at once linking her lot with Walter Joyce's—her mother's ill-health seemed expressly suited for the purpose—and would suggest that he should go out first to Berlin, and see how he liked his new employment, returning later in the year, when, if all things seemed convenient, they could be married. She was evidently a clever girl, and these were probably the tactics she would pursue. Lady Caroline wondered whether she was right in her conjecture, and there was the letter, a glance at which would solve her doubts, lying before her! What a ridiculous

thing that people were not allowed to read each other's letters! Her ladyship told the butler to see that that letter was sent at once to Mr. Joyce, who was in the library, expecting it.

The Westhope household was eminently well drilled, and the footman, who handed the letter on the salver to Mr. Joyce, was as respectful as though the secretary were my lord himself. He had heard Lady Caroline's remark to the butler, and had turned the missive over and scrutinised it as he carried it along the passages. The handwriting of the address, though firm, was unmistakably feminine, and the footman, a man of the world, coupling this fact with what he had heard, arrived at the conclusion that the letter was from Mr. Joyce's "young woman." He walked up to Joyce, who was busily engaged in writing, croaked out, "A letter, sir," in the tone usually adopted by him to offer to dinner-guests their choice between hock and champagne, and watched the secretary's manner. Joyce took the letter from the salver, muttered his thanks, and turned back to his work. The footman bowed and left the room with the idea, as he afterwards remarked to the butler, that if his suppositions were correct, the secretary was not "a fellow of much warmth of feelin'; looked at it and put it down by his arm as though it was a bill, he did!"

But when the door had shut behind the retreating figure of the Mercury in plush, Walter Joyce threw down his pen and took up the letter, and pressed it to his lips. Then he opened it, not eagerly indeed, but with a bright light in his eyes, and a happy smile upon his lips. And then he read it. He started at the first line, astonished at the cold tone in which Marian addressed him, but after that he read the letter straight through, without evincing any outward sign of emotion. When he had finished it he paused, and shook his head quickly, as one who has received some stunning blow, and passed his hand rapidly across his brow, then set to work to read the letter again. He had been through it hurriedly before, but this time he read every word, then he pushed the paper from him, and flung himself forward on the desk, burying his face in his hands. Thus he remained during some ten minutes; when he raised himself his face was very white save round the eyes, where the skin was flushed and strained, and his hands trembled very much. He reeled, too, a little when he first stood up, but he soon conquered that, and began silently pacing the room to and fro. Some time afterwards, when asked to explain what he had felt at that crisis in his life, Joyce declared he could not tell. Not anger against Marian, certainly, no vindictive rage against her who had treated him so basely. His life was spoiled, he felt that; it had never been very brilliant, or very much worth having, but the one ray which had illumined it had been suddenly extinguished, and the future was in utter darkness. He was in the condition of a man who has been stunned, or has fainted, and to whom the recollection of the events immediately engrossing his attention when, as it were, he was last in life, came but slowly. He had but a confused idea of the contents of Marian's letter. Its general tenor of course he knew, but he had to think over the details. The letter was there, lying before him on the desk where he had thrown it, but he seemed to have an odd but invincible repugnance to reading it again. After a somewhat laborious process of thought he remembered it all. She was going to be married to Mr. Creswell—that was it. She could not face a life of poverty, she said; the comforts and luxuries which she had enjoyed for the last few months had become necessary to her happiness, and she had chosen between him and them. She did not pretend to care for the man she was about to marry, she merely intended to make use of him as the means to an end. Poor Marian! that was a bad state for her to be in—poor Marian! She had jilted him, but she had sacrificed herself: he did not know which was the more forlorn out-look.

Yes, it was all over for him! Nothing mattered much now! Copy out anecdotes from the family chronicles, hunt up antiquities and statistics for those speeches with which Lord Hetherington intended to astonish the world in the forthcoming session, settle down as librarian and secretary for as long as this noble family would have him, and when they kicked him out live by literary hack work until he found another noble family ready to receive him in the old capacity for a hundred and fifty pounds a year—why not? He smiled grimly to himself as he thought of the Berlin proposition, and how astonished old Byrne would be when he wrote to decline it, for he should decline it at once. He had thought about it so often and so much, he had allowed his imagination to feast him with such pictures of himself established there with Marian by his side, that he felt utterly unable to face the dark blank

reality, heartbroken and alone. Besides, what motive had he for work now? Experience had taught him that he could always find sufficient press-work in London to keep body and soul together, and what more did he want? What more did—— Was it all real, or was he dreaming? Marian! was it all over between him and her? was she no longer his Marian? was he never to see her, to touch her hand, to hold her in his arms, to live in the light of those loving eyes again? He thought of their last conversation and their parting, he thought of his last letter to her, so full of hope and love; so tender of the past, so full of the future; and there, to that, was the reply lying before him announcing her marriage. Her marriage—her sale! She had bartered herself away for fine houses, horses, carriages, dresses; she, daughter of James Ashurst, who had loved her as the apple of his eye, and would as soon have thought of her renouncing her religion as of her breaking her plighted word.

It was odd, he could not explain it; but his thoughts ran more upon her than upon himself. He found himself picturing her as the squire's lady, taking up her position in society, seated at the head of her table receiving her guests, at church in the pew which he recollected so well. He recollected the back of her head and the kneeling figure as he had noticed it Sunday after Sunday when he sat amongst the boys in the school-pew immediately behind her, recollected the little grave bow she would give him as she passed to her seat, and the warm hand-pressure with which she always met him after morning service. His love had lived on that warm hand-pressure for days; hers, it seems, was not so easily nourished. He wondered at himself for the way in which he found himself thinking of her. Had the mere notion of such treatment ever entered his mind he should have been raving, now when the actual fact had occurred he was quiet. He ran through the whole matter in his mind again, pointed out to himself the deception that she had practised on him, the gross breach of faith of which she had been guilty, showed himself plainly how her desertion of him had sprung from the basest motives, not from lack of love for him, not from overweening fancy for another — those were human motives and might be pardoned her —but from mere avarice and mammon-worship. And, after cogitating over all this he felt that he pitied rather than hated her, and that as to himself, he had not the remotest care what became of him.

A knock at the door, and before he could answer Lady Caroline had entered the room. Joyce was rather pleased than otherwise at the interruption. He had taken her ladyship so far into his confidence that it was impossible to hide from her this last act in the drama, and it was infinitely pleasanter that the explanation should come about here—accidentally, as it were—than that he should have to seek her with his story.

"Good morning, Mr. Joyce!"

"Good morning, Lady Caroline!"

"Mr. Joyce, a triumphal procession, consisting of Lady Hetherington and the new housekeeper, is marching round the house, settling what's to be done in each room between this and the autumn. I confess I have not sufficient strength of mind to be present at those solemn rites, and as this is the only room in the house in which no change ever takes place—save the increase of dust, and lately the acquisition of a bonâ fide student—I have taken refuge here, and have brought the Times in order that I may be sure not to disturb you by chattering."

"You will not disturb me in the least, I assure you."

"Why what a dreadfully hollow voice, and——Mr. Joyce!" continued Lady Caroline, changing her tone, "how very unwell you look—so strangely pale and drawn! Is anything the matter?"

"Nothing, nothing in the least!" he replied. "You have been good enough to let me talk to you about myself and my hopes and aspirations, Lady Caroline Mansergh. You have probably forgotten"—Ah, man, devoid of the merest accidence of worldly grammar—"you have probably forgotten that this is the morning on which I was to expect my answer from Miss Ashurst. It has come! It is here!" and he stooped forward, picked from the table the letter, and handed it to her.

Lady Caroline seemed rather surprised at this mode of proceeding. She took the letter from Walter's hand, but held it unopened before her, and said, "You wish me to read it?"

"If you please," he replied. "There is no other way by which you could exactly comprehend the situation, and I wish you to be made aware of it—and—and to advise me in it."

Lady Caroline blushed slightly as she heard these last words, but she said nothing,

merely bowed and opened the letter. As she read it, the flush which had died away returned more brightly than before, her eyes could not be seen under their downcast lids, but the brows were knit, the nostrils trembled, and the mouth grew hard and rigid. She read the letter through, twice, then she looked up, and her voice shook as she said, "That is a wicked and base letter, very heartless and very base!"

"Lady Caroline!" interrupted Joyce, appealingly.

"What! do you seek to defend it?—no, not to defend it, for in your own heart you must know I am right in my condemnation of it, but to plead for it. You don't like to hear me speak harshly of it—that's so like a man! I tell you that it is a heartless and an unwomanly letter! 'Deepens the pain with which she writes,' indeed! Deepens the pain! and what about yours? 'It is her nature to love money, and comforts and luxuries, and to shrink from privations!' Her nature! What was she bred to, this duchess?"

In his misery at hearing Marian thus spoken of, since the blow had fallen upon him he had never been so miserable as then, when she was attacked, and he saw the impossibility of defending her. Joyce could not help remarking that he had never noticed Lady Caroline's beauty so much as at that moment, when her eyes were flashing and her ripe lips curling with contempt. But he was silent, and she proceeded:

"She says you are better without her, and, though of course you doubt it, I am mightily disposed to agree with her! I—Mr. Joyce!" said her ladyship, suddenly softening her tone, "believe me, I feel earnestly and deeply for you under this blow! I fear it is none the less severe because you don't show how much you suffer. This—this young lady's decision will, of course, materially affect the future which you had plotted out for yourself, and of which we spoke the last time we were here together?"

"Oh yes, of course,—now I shall—by the way, Lady Caroline, I recollect now—it scarcely impressed me then—that during that conversation you seemed to have some doubts as to what Marian—as to what might be the reply to the letter which I told you I had written?"

"I certainly had."

"And you endeavoured to wean me from the miserable self-conceit under which I was labouring, and failed. I recollect your hints now! Tell me, Lady Caroline, why was I so blind? What made you suspect?"

"My dear Mr. Joyce, you were blind because you were in love! I suspected, because being merely a looker-on, an interested one, I acknowledge, for I had a great interest in your welfare, but still merely a looker-on, and therefore, according to the old proverb, seeing most of the game, I could not help noticing that the peculiar position of affairs, and the length of time you remained without any news of your fiancée, afforded grave grounds of suspicion."

"Yes!" said poor Walter—"as you say! I am blind! I never noticed that."

"Now, Mr. Joyce," said Lady Caroline, "the question is not with the past, but with the future. What do you intend doing?"

"I have scarcely thought! It matters very little!"

"Pardon my saying that it matters very much! Do you think of taking up this appointment for the newspaper that you spoke of?—this correspondentship in Berlin?"

"No! I think not! I really don't know! I thought of remaining as I am!"

"What! pass the rest of your life in writing Lord Hetherington's letters, and cramming him for speeches which he will never deliver?"

"It is an honest and an easy way of earning a living, at all events."

"Of earning a living! And are you going to content yourself with 'earning your living,' Mr. Joyce?"

"Oh, Lady Caroline, why should I do anything else? The desire for making money has gone from me altogether with the receipt and perusal of that letter! She was the spur that urged me on; my dreams of fame and wealth and position were for her, not for myself, and now——"

"And now you are going to abandon it all, do you mean to tell me that? That you, a young man possessing intellect, and energy, and industry, with a career before you, are about to abandon that career, and to condemn yourself to vegetation—sheer and simple vegetation, mind, not life—merely because you have been grossly deceived by a woman, who, your common sense ought to have told you, has been playing you false for months, and who, as she herself confesses, has all her life rated the worthiness of people as to what they were worth in money? You are clearly not in your right mind, Mr. Joyce. I am surprised at you!"

"What would you have me do, Lady Caroline? You sneer at the notion of my remaining with Lord Hetherington! Surely you would not have me go to Berlin?"

"I never sneer at anything, my dear Mr. Joyce! Sneering shows very bad breeding! I say distinctly that I think you would be mad to fritter away your days in your present position. Nor do I think, under circumstances, you ought to go to Berlin. It would have done very well as a stepping-stone had things turned out differently, but now you would be always drawing odious comparisons between your solitary lot and the 'what might have been,' as Owen Meredith so sweetly puts it."

"Where, then, shall I go?"

"To London! Where else should any one go with a desire to make a mark in the world, and energy and determination to aid him in accomplishing his purpose? And this is your case. Ah, you may shake your head, but I tell you it is! You think differently just now, but when once you are there, 'in among the throngs of men,' you will acknowledge it! Why, when you were there, at the outset of your career, utterly friendless and alone, as you have told me, you found friends and work, and now that you are known, and by a certain few appreciated, do you think it will be otherwise?"

"You are marvellously inspiriting, Lady Caroline, and I can never be sufficiently grateful for the advice you have given me, —better still for the manner in which you have given it. But, suppose I do go to London, what—in the cant phrase of the day—what am I to 'go in for'?"

"Newspaper writing—what do they call it?—journalism, at first, the profession in which you were doing so well when you came here. That, if I mistake not, will in due course lead to something else, about which we will talk at some future time."

"That is just what I was coming to, Lady Caroline! You will allow me to see you sometimes?"

"I shall be always deeply interested in your welfare, Mr. Joyce, and anxious to know how you progress! Oh, yes, I hope both to see and hear a great deal of you. Besides, Lord Hetherington may feel inclined to take up the Chronicles again; he is rather off them just now, I know—and then you can give your successor some very valuable hints!"

When Lady Caroline Mansergh was alone in her own room after this conversation, she reflected long and deeply upon the effect which the receipt of that letter would probably produce upon Walter Joyce, and was sufficiently interested to analyse her own feelings in regard to it. Was she sorry or glad that the intended match had been broken off, and that Joyce was now, so far as his heart was concerned, a free man? That he was free she was certain; that he would never return to the old allegiance she was positive. Lady Caroline in her worldly experience had frequently come across cases of the kind, where the tender regret which at first forbade any harsh mention, scarcely any harsh thought of the false one, had in a very short time given place to a feeling of mortified vanity and baffled desire, which prompted the frankest outpourings, and made itself heard in the bitterest objurgations. The question was, how it affected her. On the whole, she thought that she was pleased at the result. She did not attempt to hide from herself that she had a certain regard for this young man, though of the nature of that regard she had scarcely troubled herself to inquire. One thing she knew, that it was very different from what she had at first intended it should be, from what in the early days of their acquaintance she had allowed it to be. Of course with such a man flirtation, in its ordinary sense, was out of the question; she would as soon have thought of flirting with the Great Pyramid as with Walter Joyce. In its place there had existed a kind of friendly interest, but Lady Caroline was fully cognisant that, on her side, that friendly interest had been deepening and strengthening until, after a little self-examination, she felt forced to confess to herself that it would bear another name. Then came the question, and if it did, what matter? She had never particularly set herself up as a strict observant of the conventionalities or the fetish worship of Society; on the contrary, her conduct in that respect had been rather iconoclastic. There need be no surprise, therefore, on the part of the world if she chose to marry out of what was supposed to be her "set" and station in Society; and if there had been, she was quite strong-minded enough to laugh at it. But to a woman of Lady Caroline's refinement it was necessary that her husband should be a gentleman, and it was necessary for her pride that, if not her equal in rank, he should not merely be her superior in talent, but should be admitted to be so. Under the fresh disposition of circumstances she saw no reason why this should not be.

Walter Joyce would go to London, would there resume his newspaper occupations, and would probably, as she guessed from occasional hints he had recently let fall, turn his attention more to politics than he had hitherto done. He must be clever, she thought! She knew him to be clever in a woman's notion of cleverness, which was so different to a man's; but he must surely be clever in a man's way too, or they would never have offered him this Berlin appointment, which, according to her notions, required not merely a bright literary style, but in a far greater degree the faculty of observation and knowledge of the world. His experience had been very small, but his natural ability and natural keenness must be great. Granted his possession of these gifts, pushed as he would be by her influence—for she intended to give him some excellent introductions — there was little doubt of his success in life, and of his speedily achieving a position which would warrant her in accepting him—in accepting him? Lady Caroline laughed outright, rather a hard bitter laugh as this idea crossed her mind, at the remembrance that Walter Joyce had never said the slightest word, or shown the smallest sign, that he cared for her as—as she wished to be cared for by him, much less that he ever aspired to her hand. However, let that pass! What was to be, would be, and there was plenty of time to think of such things. Meanwhile, it was decidedly satisfactory that the engagement was broken off between him and that girl, whom Lady Caroline had been accustomed to regard as a simple country wench, a bread-and-butter miss, but who cetrainly had done her jilting with a coolness and aplomb, worthy of a London beauty in her third season. She would have been a drag on Walter's life; for, although ambitious to a degree, and always wanting to rise beyond her sphere, she would have induced him to persevere at his work, and have encouraged him to great efforts; yet, according to Lady Caroline's idea, fame could not be achieved when a man was surrounded by babies requiring to be fed, and other domestic drawbacks, and had not merely himself but a large family to drag up the hill of difficulty, ere eminence was attained. Now Walter would be really free, even from mental ties, Lady Caroline thought, with a half sigh, and if he were ever to do anything worthy of himself, the beginning at least should be now.

The conversation with Lady Caroline Mansergh had not merely the effect of diverting Walter Joyce's thoughts from the contemplation of his own unhappiness, for the time being, but rousing within him certain aspirations which he had scarcely ever previously entertained, and which, when they had occasionally arisen in his mind, he had successfully endeavoured to stifle and ignore. No doubt the advice which Lady Caroline had given him was most excellent and should be followed. There was a future before him, and a brilliant one! He would prove to Marian (already his feelings towards her were beginning to change)—he would prove to Marian that his life was not made utterly blank on account of her cruel treatment; on the contrary, he would try and achieve some end and position, such as he would never have aspired to if he had remained in the calm jog-trot road of life he had planned for himself. He would go to London, to old Byrne, and see whether instead of being sent to Berlin he could not be received on the staff of the paper in London, and he would turn his attention to politics: old Byrne would be of immense use to him there, and he would study and work night and day. Anything to get on, anything to become distinguished, to make a name!

His decision once taken, Joyce lost no time in communicating it to Lord Hetherington. He said that circumstances of great family importance necessitated his immediate return to London, and would require all the attention he could bestow on them for many months to come. Lord Hetherington was a little taken aback by the suddenness of the announcement, but as he had always had a kindly feeling towards Joyce, and since the day of the ice accident he had regarded him with especial favour, he put the best face he could on the occasion, and expressed his great regret at his secretary's intended departure. His lordship begged that when Mr. Joyce had any leisure time at his disposal he would call upon him at Hetherington House, where they would be always glad to see him; and Joyce trusted that if ever his lordship thought that he (Joyce) could be useful to him in any way, more especially as connected with the Chronicles with which he was so familiar, he would do him the honour to send for him, through Mr. Byrne, who would always know his address. And thus they parted, after the interview, with mutual expressions of goodwill.

This was a little excitement for Lord

Hetherington, who at once started off, so soon as Joyce had left him, to tell her ladyship the news. Lady Hetherington was far more interested in the fact that the secretary had given warning, as she persisted in calling it, than her husband had anticipated. She had always, except when temporarily aroused on the occasion of the accident, been so determined to ignore Mr. Joyce's existence, or had treated him with such marked coldness when compelled to acknowledge it, that his lordship was quite astonished to see how interested she showed herself, how she persisted in cross-questioning him as to what Joyce had stated to be the cause of his leaving, and as to whether he had mentioned it to any other person in the house. On being assured by her husband that he had come straight to her boudoir after parting with the secretary, Lady Hetherington seemed pleased, and strictly enjoined the little lord not to mention it to any one.

They were a very small party at dinner that day, only Mr. Biscoe being present in addition to the members of the family. The conversation was not very brisk, the countess being full of the coming London season, a topic on which Mr. Biscoe, who hated town, and never went near it when he could help it, could scarcely expect to be enthusiastic, Lord Hetherington being always silent, and Lady Caroline on this occasion pre-occupied. But when the cloth was removed, and the servants had left the room, Lady Hetherington, in the interval of playing with a few grapes, looked across at her sister-in-law, and said:

"By the way, Caroline, Lord Hetherington's secretary has given warning!"

"You mean that Mr. Joyce is going away, is that it? I thought so, but you have such a curious way of putting things, Margaret!"

"How should I have put it? I meant exactly what I said!"

"Oh, of course, if you choose to import the phraseology of the servants'-hall into your conversation, you are at perfect liberty to do so."

"Anyhow, the fact remains the same. We are to be bereaved of the great secretary! Weren't you astonished when I told you?"

"Not the least in the world!"

"Because you had heard it before?"

"Exactly!"

"From Lord Hetherington?"

"Oh no!" laughed Lady Caroline; "don't scold poor dear West on the idea that he had anticipated you! I heard it from Mr. Joyce himself."

"Oh, of course you did!" said Lady Hetherington, slightly tossing her head. "Well, of course you're very much grieved. He was such a favourite of yours."

"Just because I like Mr. Joyce very much, or, as you phrase it, because he is a favourite of mine, I'm very pleased to think that he's going away. A man of his abilities is lost in his present position."

"I quite agree with you, Lady Caroline," said Mr. Biscoe. "Sound scholar, Mr. Joyce, clear head, well grounded and quick at picking up—good fellow, too!"

"I'm sure," said Lord Hetherington, "I've grown so accustomed to him I shall feel like—what's-his-name—fish out of water, without him."

"I dare say we shall manage to exist when Mr. Joyce has left us," said the countess; "we scrambled on somehow before, and I really don't see the enormous improvement since he came."

Nobody commented on this, and the conversation dropped. Lady Hetherington was cross and disappointed. She expected to have found her sister-in-law very much annoyed at the fact of Mr. Joyce's departure, whereas, in place of visible grief or annoyance, there was a certain air of satisfaction about Lady Caroline which was dreadfully annoying to the countess.

Two days after, Joyce left for London, Marian's letter, on Lady Caroline's advice, and in accordance with his own feelings, remaining without notice.

HOROLOGY.

What should we do without clocks and watches? Is there anything comparable to the misery of being benighted on a country road with a watch that has stopped in one's waistcoat pocket, and not a clock within view to tell one the time? The sun has set, every minute's tramping on the dusky, murky road seems as an hour. We have a train to catch, a dinner to be in time for, or a district meeting to attend, at which it won't do to be late. On ordinary occasions, when cool and collected, we might be able to compute the time, but in straits like these our reckoning deserts us. It may be five, or six, or seven, for all we know; we should not be surprised to hear it was eight. Our notions get muddled, and on we trudge, breathless, nervous, and irritable; pretty certain, too, to find in the end that we have been fretting ourselves for nothing.

But it is of no use asking how we should get on without clocks and watches. The timepiece may almost be said to be the mainspring of

civilisation. It is so intimately connected with all our wants, it is so completely the regulator of all our occupations, that we have become, as it were, its slaves; and we can no more imagine a state of social existence without it, than we can imagine birds flying without wings, or any other thing that is totally impossible.

The first people who appear to have allotted the day into portions were the Assyrians, who invented the water clock, at a period too remote for precise calculation. All we know for certain is, that the apparatus existed before the overthrow of the first Assyrian empire by Arbaces and Belesis, in the year 759 B.C., for we find by the tradition of early Persian authors that the use of it was general in Nineveh under the reign of Phul, better known as Sardanapalus the Second, the first monarch of the second Assyrian empire. This water clock was nothing more than a brass vessel of cylindrical shape, holding several gallons of water. A very small hole was bored in one of its sides, through which the liquid was allowed to trickle; and it was calculated that the vessel could empty itself about five or six times in a day. Under the reign of Phul, the royal palace of Nineveh, and each of the principal districts of the city, possessed a water clock of the same shape and capacity. They were filled together, or as nearly as possible together, at the signal of a watchman stationed aloft on a tower to proclaim the rising of the sun, and they remained all day in the keeping of officials, whose business it was to fill them as soon as they became empty. There was a regular staff of criers employed in connexion with each of the time offices, and as often as the water clocks were replenished they spread through the streets shouting out the fact for the benefit of the townspeople. In this way a sort of rough computation of the flight of time was held. The intervals between the filling and emptying of the vessels were called "watches," and were, probably, of two hours or two hours and a half's duration. But it is hard to suppose that the water clocks kept very steady pace with each other; the difficulty of making by hand vessels of exactly the same size, of drilling them with holes of precisely the same diameter, and of supplying them with water of just the same density, must have given rise to even more irregularity in the working of these machines than exists at present in the movements of our city clocks: those clocks of which Charles Lamb said that they allowed him to walk from the Strand to Temple Bar in no time, and gain five minutes!

The water clock, or clepsydra, continued to remain in its primitive condition for many centuries; and it was not until the invention of the sun-dial at Alexandria, five hundred and fifty-eight years before Christ, that it underwent any improvement. About that time, however, an Egyptian, of Memphis, added a dial with a hand to the clepsydra. The hand revolved on a pivot, and communicated with a string which was fastened to a float. As the water leaked out, the float fell with it, and the tension of the string caused the hand to move round with slight spasmodic jerks, something like those of the second-hand on a watch of inferior make. This reform, meritorious enough in theory, proved somewhat deficient in practice; for the old difficulty about getting the clocks to keep step was doubled or trebled when the system became complicated with dial, needle, string, and float. To ensure simultaneous acting, the string or wire of the different clocks ought to have been of the same length and force; the needles also ought to have been of a size and set on pivots exactly similar in point of height and circumference. And when all this had been obtained, there was still the question as to how to make float and string, string and needle, act in perfect unison. Often, through rust, or some other cause, the needle must have proved obdurate to the faint tug of the string, and the float, in consequence, have remained suspended in mid air; whereupon, of course, the dial became mute, and Egyptians, who disliked innovations, must have shrugged their shoulders. But, notwithstanding its drawbacks, the improvement was a very valuable one, if for no other reason than that it prepared the way for further changes, and led to the perfecting of the clepsydra by the substitution of a system of dented wheels for that already in use. The wheels were set at work on the water-mill principle, and the addition of a second needle to the dial allowed the clock to mark the fractions of the different "watches." This was the ne plus ultra as far as the clepsydra was concerned; it dates from two hundred and fifty years before Christ, and Egypt, which had become the great mart of the new timepieces, exported them to the different countries of the East as rare curiosities, and at fabulous prices. When Pompey returned to Rome, in the year sixty-two before Christ, from triumphing over Tigranes, Antiochus, and Mithridates, one of the most valuable trophies he brought with him from the treasures of the King of Pontus was a clepsydra, marking the hours and minutes according to the method of horology in use at Rome. The cylinder which served as receptacle for the water was of gold, as was also the dial-plate. The hands were studded with small rubies, and each of the cyphers that denoted the twenty-four hours was cut out of a sapphire. It must have been of enormous size, for the cylinder only needed replenishing once a day. The Romans had never seen anything like it, and when Pompey caused it to be set up in the chief hall of the Capitol, it needed a strong guard of soldiers to protect it against the indiscreet curiosity of the mob.

We come now to those ages of total darkness which followed the overthrow of the Roman Empire, when science, art, and everything that was refined fell into contempt and oblivion. The barbarians who conquered the imperial city had very primitive modes of marking the course of time. They knew nothing about hours and minutes; they had not sense enough to invent water-clocks, and sun-dials, even had

they been acquainted with them, would have served them but little in lands such as theirs, where the sun only shone on rare occasions, and where cold, fog, and rain held sway for half the year. However, it was necessary that they should know when to prepare their meals of half-cooked meat, when to gather in circles to listen to the preaching of their druids, and when to relieve the sentries who mounted guard on the outskirts of their settlements; and so this is what they imagined. At the break of dawn, when the chieftain of the camp or village rose, a boy-slave came and took up his position at the entrance of his hut, and sat down with two helmets, one full of pebbles and the other empty, before him. His business was to transfer the pebbles, one by one, and not too fast, from the first helmet to the second; after which he surrendered his turn to some one else, who repeated the operation, and so on till dusk. As the helmets were mostly very big, and the pebbles, on the contrary, very small, the process of emptying must have taken a good two hours. It is probable, therefore, that the days of these Franks and Norsemen, Teutons and Vandals, were divided, like those of the Assyrians, into six parts or watches. As soon as a helmet had been emptied, the fact was proclaimed through the camp by the striking of a sword against a shield, gong fashion, at the chieftain's door. The echo was caught up around, and men knew that dinner time had come.

But this was not the only method of marking the time. There were other ways, which differed according to the locality and the various pursuits of the people. In peasant districts, the labourer reckoned by the number of furrows he could plough, or, if it was harvest time, by the quantity of corn he could reap. In towns, where some faint remnant of Roman civilisation survived, the reckoning was kept by watchmen. At daybreak a soldier started on foot (or, if the town was a large one, on horseback) to walk round the city. When he had gone his round, the first watch was over; and he returned to his quarters blowing loud on a trumpet, whilst a second soldier set out in silence to perform the second watch. This continued uninterruptedly day and night, the only difference being that after sunset there was no trumpet blowing, and that the watchmen, instead of proceeding singly, went their rounds in batches of ten or a dozen.

Finally, as a last instance of barbarous chronometry, we may allude to the method employed in monasteries, the first of which, founded by St. Benedict, was instituted at the beginning of the sixth century (A.D. 523). The monks were in the habit of computing time by the number of prayers they could gabble, and it was hence that the custom of wearing chaplets of beads arose. The task assigned to each monk was to recite as many "paters" and "aves" as there were beads on his string, and as the orthodox number on a chaplet was supposed to be then, as it is now, thirty-three—that is, one for each year of our Saviour's life—there was work for a full hour and a half, if conscientiously performed. As in the case of the urban watchmen, one monk was relieved by another, and the termination of each "vigil" was notified to the community by the tolling of the chapel bell. We may add that this custom continues unaltered in certain monastic establishments. In monasteries of a severe order there is no such thing as a clock to be seen. The only timekeepers are the shorn, becowled monks, kneeling in perpetual adoration.

A century after the final overthrow of the Roman Empire, the habit of reckoning by hours and minutes had completely disappeared from Western Europe. One by one every vestige of art and science disappeared, and, had it not been for the kingdoms of the East, which kept the flame of science just flickering whilst the West was in darkness, our present system of horology would have fallen into complete abeyance. It was the famous Caliph of Bagdad, Haroun-al-Raschid, who restored the old water clock to Europe. In the year 807 he sent a magnificent clepsydra as a token of friendship to Charlemagne; but it seems that the present was looked upon as a thing to be rather admired than copied, for we find no mention of any water clocks of French make until the reign of Philip, contemporary of William the Conqueror. Perhaps the reason of this is that the sand-glass (sablier) had been invented in France shortly before the accession of Charlemagne, and that this last contrivance was judged more handy and simple than the other. The first sablier was made by the same man who re-invented the blowing of glass, after the secret had been lost for some centuries. He was a monk of Chartres, named Luitprand, and the sand-glass he made was the exact prototype of all those that have been manufactured since. It consisted of two receptacles of pear-like shape joined by their slender ends. When the sand had all run out from one into the other, the lower glass was turned uppermost and kept in that position till empty. Shortly after he had received the gift of Haroun-al-Raschid, Charlemagne caused a monster sablier to be made with the horal divisions marked on the outside by thin lines of red paint. This was the first *hour*-glass. It required to be turned over once only in twelve hours, and, if it was blown with anything like the care which modern hour-glasses are, it must have kept time with as much precision as the best of lever clocks. Indeed, it is not rare to hear people declare, even now-a-days, that the hour-glass is the best timepiece that was ever invented.

Whilst France was thus showing to the front in matters of science, Old England, with true conservative instinct, was still marking time in a host of antiquated, inconvenient ways. Neither did our ancestors betray any greater disposition to adopt the French inventions than we do in these days, when it is a question of taking up some good reform that comes to us from abroad. King Alfred, who reigned from 872 to 900, must certainly have heard speak of the hour-glass; it is even very probable that he possessed one of his own, for the monks and

pilgrims, who were continually travelling to and fro between England and France, would not have allowed a whole century to elapse, without bringing a specimen of the new invention to this country. And yet Alfred devised a method of computing time by means of a rushlight set in a lantern. Anything more unsatisfactory and more expensive than this it was impossible to imagine. A rushlight, in those days, must have cost two or three pence of our money; and, as the process of refining tallow had not then been discovered, there were no means whatever of reckoning how long one of these luminaries would take in burning. One might very well flicker and splutter for an hour, whilst a second was just as likely to flame away in ten minutes. It was not till the reign of Edward the Confessor (1041-1066) that the use of the hour-glass became pretty general in England; and the first water clock seen in this kingdom was one brought from France by Richard Cœur de Lion, a few years before he ascended the throne.

We must now skip two centuries, during which horology made no sensible progress, and come to the reign of Charles the Fifth of France, when the first real clock was set up. This was in the year 1374. The maker was one Henri de Vic, an Arab, who had been converted to Christianity. This clock was a monster machine, weighing five hundredweight. It was moved by weights, was possessed of an horizontal lever, and provided with a bell to toll the time. There is a full description of it in Froissart. It was put up in the round tower of the royal palace (now the Palais de Justice), and attracted enormous crowds every day for several months after it had been erected. The maker received a pension of a hundred crowns of gold for life, and was ennobled. He is the first artificer upon whom this distinction was ever conferred in France.

From this time the making of large clocks for public edifices was carried on very extensively over Europe; but it was not until the beginning of the sixteenth century that small clocks were made for apartments. The first we know of came from Florence, in 1518, as a present from Julio di Medici (afterwards Pope Clement the Seventh) to Francis the First of France. It was also in this same sixteenth century that horology was first applied to astronomical calculations by Purbach, in 1500. In 1560, the Danish astronomer, Tycho-Brahe, the teacher of the great Kepler, set up in his magnificent observatory of Craniesburg a clock which marked both the minutes and the seconds.

The invention of watches had preceded by a few years that of small clocks. Our ideas of a primitive watch are always associated with a turnip; but it was not until the seventeenth century, when the Scotchman, Graham, invented the cylindrical escapement, that watches assumed this respectable but inconvenient shape. At first they affected all sorts of fancy forms, such as those of acorns, olives, walnuts, and crosses. They cost fabulous sums of money, and were generally worn as pendants hanging by a gold chain from ladies' bracelets. Claude, wife of Francis the First, had one so small that it was set in a ring.

Popular tradition ascribes the invention of watches to Peter Hele of Nuremberg, in the year 1490. But then it is a notorious fact that King Robert of Scotland possessed one, so far back as the year 1310. The only way in which we can account for this discrepancy is by the supposition that watches were originally invented by a Scotchman, but that the maker died suddenly without promulgating his secret. German watches were not introduced at the English court until 1597. The first seen in England was worn by the beautiful Lady Arabella Stuart.

It is to Hugens of Zulichem that the greatest, we might almost say the last, progress in the art of horology is due. But Hugens only caught up an idea that had first occurred to the great Galileo. Every one knows the story of the lamp suspended to the vault of the cathedral of Pisa, the oscillation of which caused the astronomer to reflect that the isochronal movements of pendulums might well be applied to the measuring of time. Galileo was only a boy when he stood watching the cathedral lamp swing; but many years after, that is in 1630, the thought came into his head again, and he drew up a plan on paper for the making of a pendulum clock. His invention went no further, however, and the honour of putting his theories into practice was reserved for Hugens, who, in 1657, forwarded to the States General of Holland the description of a timepiece, constructed on the new principles. Its perfection lay in the introduction of the pendulum and of the spiral main-spring. The name of Hugens deserves to be remembered, for his pendulum clock is the most admirable and yet most simple machine that has ever been invented.

The invention of spring pocket watches, such as we now wear, is owing to the Englishman Hooke, it dates from 1658; and eighteen years after this, in the year 1676, the first repeating watch was made at Amsterdam. From this time until the present century, when chronometers and stop-watches were invented, the science of horology received no further developments; neither do we well see how it can receive any, unless some future Hele or some future Hugens discover a method of making clocks go by electricity without giving us the trouble of winding.

In these days it is a mooted point as to which is the best country in which to buy a watch or clock. In the last century it was universally admitted that the watches of Geneva were unrivalled, whilst the sculptured wooden-case clocks made in the Hartz mountains of Germany had the reputation of being the surest goers, as well as the most valuable in point of artistic merit. Now-a-days, however, Geneva, from wishing to make too cheaply, has somewhat lost her prestige for making well, and Swiss watches have come to be looked upon with some disfavour, especially in England. The battle

seems to lie now by general consent between France and Great Britain; our neighbours priding themselves upon the exquisite beauty of their ladies' watches, whilst we, on the contrary, carry off the palm for the soundness and finish of our men's watches. But there is one branch of horology in which the French cannot even attempt to compete with us, and that is in the making of chronometers. English chronometers are held incomparable the whole world over, and this is no wonder when we remember the severe tests to which all official chronometers (that is those used in Her Majesty's Navy) are subjected before they are approved by the sign-manual of the Astronomer Royal. All naval chronometers have undergone a probationary stage of six months, a year, and in some cases two years, at the Greenwich Observatory, before receiving their liceat to go over the seas. During this time they are submitted to a whole series of scientific experiments, comprising all possible changes of temperature, ordeal by fire, and ordeal by water. So that it may well be said when one of them passes the examination, that the man who has made it deserves something better than the title of mechanic; he should take rank as an artist, and a first-rate artist too.

In conclusion, we may remark that the Greenwich Observatory is often a depository for other chronometers than those which are intended for the fleet. Conscientious makers send the chronometers they intend for the public to be tested there before offering them for sale; and we should advise anybody about to purchase one of these valuable time-keepers to insist on the Greenwich mark upon it, as he would for the Hall mark if buying silver plate. It is well to be always on the safe side.

LOTS OF MONEY.

It is a common notion among the poor and struggling that it is a fine thing to be rich; and that if wealth is not happiness, it is a very near approach to it. Doubtless it is a good thing to be rich, if the rich person knows the value of riches, and turns them to a proper account, for his own advantage, and that of his family, his friends, and his fellow-creatures. Doubtless, too, it is a very sad thing to be poor, to endure cold, hunger, and nakedness; or to owe debts which one cannot pay. But when the mass of people come to the conclusion that, as a rule, the rich are much happier than the poor, and that the poor have no compensation for the hardship of their lot, and the rich no drawbacks on the luxury of theirs—an error of serious consequence to their own well-being takes possession of their minds, and leads to that worst kind of idolatry, money-worship, and that worst kind of heresy, that it is everybody's duty to get rich.

In the course of a not very long life I have known the histories of many persons who had, to use the common phrase, "lots of money"—money that they either acquired by speculation, by industry, or successful commerce, or that they had inherited from their ancestors. Out of seven such people whose histories I knew, five were either very miserable in their minds, disappointed in their hopes, or would gladly have exchanged all their money for something that poor people had, but which unkind Fate had not bestowed upon them. The first of these little histories is that of a gentleman who had acquired a million of money, at least, by successful commerce, and was able to retire in the prime of life and strength, and marry for love, a young lady, well-born, accomplished, and beautiful. The world was fair before them. They had a town house and a country house, and a shooting box in the Highlands. They had a large library, and a picture gallery, carriages and horses, and a yacht. They had troops of friends, and the respect of everybody who knew them. They were hospitable and charitable, and adorned every society into which they entered. But they were not altogether happy after the first two or three years of their wedded life. Not that their love diminished, but Fortune, which had given them so much, did not give them everything. The gentleman desired an heir to his estates, and the lady, with a large maternal heart, desired a child, for the sake of a child; and the blessed boon, for which she would have been so grateful and so happy, was denied her. Beggars came to her gate with twins in their arms, and she sometimes thought that such beggars were happier than she; at last the sight of an infant would so excite her envy, and would so deeply impress her with the sense of loneliness, and of undeserved misery, as to produce paroxysms of passionate hysteria.

Another little story is that of a successful manufacturer, but rude, unlettered, and without much mental resource to help him to pass away his time, who retired from business at the age of sixty, and built himself a splendid mansion—he called it a castle—on the shore of a lovely lake, in the Highlands of Scotland, far away from the highways of travel, in order that his aristocratic seclusion might not be invaded by tourists, or desecrated by the plebeian rail and the whiz of the democratic locomotive. When the "castle" was furnished, and his grounds were laid out to his order, he suddenly discovered that he had nothing to do, or to occupy his time. He was no company to himself, and he and his wife were mentally as opposed to each other as vinegar and oil. Friends and acquaintances occasionally came to visit him; but he lived too far out of the beaten track, to expect visits from any but idlers, and what the Scotch call "sorners," and as his conversation was not amusing, and he never lent or gave away money, even such waifs and strays from the great fold of humanity seldom ventured into his remote seclusion. He was too proud to go back to the great city and recommence business, which might have been the best thing for him to have

done under the circumstances. So he continued to dwell in his mountain fortress, without an object in life, or any amusement that he cared about. He had nothing to do but to fish, or to shoot, and he cared nothing for either of these modes of pastime. After about six months of it, he ordered a boat upon the lake, to go, as he said, fishing for salmon. Unobserved by any one, he put an old grindstone into the boat, and a few yards of rope line, and rowed himself away to the middle of the lake. He was never seen again alive. The boat drifted on shore without him in the evening, and three days afterwards his body was drawn from the bottom of the lake, with the grindstone tied round its neck.

The third little story is equally suggestive. A very hard-working professional man, careful, prudent, abstemious, but somewhat eccentric, retired from busy life with thirty thousand pounds: in order, as he said, to enjoy himself, and pass the evenings of his life in the mild radiance of the setting sun. It could not be said of him that he had no resources in his mind, for he was learned, witty, fond of books, music, and pictures; and he was happily married. All his friends (and he had many) to whom his harmless eccentricities and real kindliness of heart, concealed under a brusque manner, were sources of attraction, anticipated for him many years of learned leisure and calm domestic happiness. But it was not to be. A serious, and as it proved, a fatal illness overtook him, before, as he expressed it, "he had been three months out of business." He did not suffer much, and by no means anticipated a fatal termination to his malady. After ten days' confinement to his room, he was somewhat alarmed by the grave face and demeanour of his usually hearty and cheerful medical attendant. "I think," said the latter, "that it is my duty to recommend to you, if you have any worldly affairs to settle, that you should settle them." The patient sprang up in the bed. "Do you mean to tell me, doctor, that I am dying?" "Oh, no!" said the doctor, kindly, "I hope not; and I trust that many happy years are in store for you. Still, if there is any matter of business for you to settle, settle it. Life is always uncertain; and it is best to be prepared for all contingencies." "Doctor," said the sick man, "you cannot deceive me. You think I am dying, and you do not like to tell me the truth. Well! I have toiled, and struggled, and screwed, and saved, for forty years, and thought that at the last I was going to enjoy myself for a little while before the end. And now you tell me I am dying. All I can say is, that it is a——." He added two words that were very tragic, very comic, very lamentable, very unrepeatable; turned his face to the wall; and never spoke more.

Fourth on my list of the unhappy rich, is a gentleman who retired, at the age of fifty, from a large and prosperous business, with the expectation that his share of the partnership would amount to half a million sterling. This expectation was not realised. On a settlement of accounts, and a valuation of the assets between him and his partners, it was found that his share fell a little, but not much, short of two hundred thousand pounds. This was a grievous disappointment to him. All his life, from very early youth, he had overworked his weary brain. He had been unwisely eager to grow rich, and had overtasked the energies both of his body and mind, in the attempt to build up a fortune, and to become the founder of a family, that should rank among the first in the county in which he resided. He loved wealth for its own sake, and with a love beyond reason. Though a clear fortune of two hundred thousand pounds, or even half of the money, would seem to most men something to be grateful for, and to be well enjoyed and well secured, it did not seem so to this greedy man, who had made money his idol, and the only object of reverence in the world. His brain was weakened by the hard work expended in making and taking care of this magnificent, but to him, disappointing sum, and he brooded so much over the failure to reach the half million he had so long calculated upon amassing, that symptoms of aberration of intellect were soon apparent to his family. His brain softened, and in less than a twelvemonth after the winding up of his partnership his mind was wholly gone, and it became necessary to place him under the protection of keepers, who attended upon him night and day, and never suffered him out of their presence, lest he should do himself a mischief. His life became a blank. It did not appear that he knew whether he was rich or poor—free or restrained—ill or well—and in this state he remained for many months, and died.

My last rich man—a very rich man he was—an owner, not of hundreds of thousands, but of millions—was not unhappy, but was, on the contrary, cheerful, and happier than most men are permitted to be in this world. But strange to say his happiness arose, not from his real wealth, but from his imaginary poverty. At the close of a long, honourable, and useful life, he took it into his head that the world had entered into a conspiracy to reduce him to pauperism, and that he should end his days in the workhouse. It was in vain to argue the point with him. His faith was fixed and settled. He came to the conviction—though the possessor of millions—that he was de jure and de facto, a pauper, and reduced in his old age to labour for his daily bread. When he consulted his son, who was to be the inheritor of his vast wealth, what was best to be done under these unhappy circumstances, the son, acting under medical advice, offered to settle a handsome annuity upon his father. The pride of the old gentleman was roused:

"No! no," he said, "give me employment. I am still hale and hearty. I have always taken great pleasure in gardening. Make me your gardener, and I will do my duty like a man; and I will owe no other man anything, except my thanks to you, my dear son, for giving me

employment such as it is consistent with my self-respect to accept. And mind you, I will accept no more than the usual wages, and no less." Still acting under medical advice, the son humoured the harmless delusion of the father, and paid him regularly his weekly wages. At last the old man died, happy that he could earn his honest bread to the last, and happier still, in the consciousness that he had so good a son.

Wealth is a great and a good thing; but who would part with his nose for any amount of it? Or with his eyesight? Or with the use of his limbs? Or with his reason? Not I! And not anybody to whom the rational enjoyment of wealth is better than wealth itself.

A CLUSTER OF LYRICS.

OCCULT SYMPATHIES. THE FIRST IDEA.

If Nature knew my sorrow
Would she borrow
My sad song?
Or if she knew my pleasures,
Would her measures
Lilt along?
Not at all! Oh, not at all!
Nature is no man's thrall,
The bird sings in the air,
And knows not of our care.
The wind amid the trees
Makes its own melodies.
What signifies to them our happiness or woe?
Let the hoarse billows roar! Let the wild breezes blow!

THE SECOND IDEA.

Not so, grave moraliser,
Be thou wiser;
And so learn,
That we ourselves to Nature
Give the feature
And the plan.
She pranks her in our guise,
And lives but in our eyes.
If you and I are glad,
The bells ring merry mad:
If we are grieved at heart,
The skies their gloom impart;
And winds among the trees, and waves upon the shore
Sound sadly, ever sadly—sadly evermore!

THE GOURD AND THE PALM. A PERSIAN FABLE.

"How old art thou?" said the garrulous gourd,
As o'er the palm tree's crest it poured
Its spreading leaves and tendrils fine,
And hung a bloom in the morning shine.
"A hundred years!" the palm tree sighed:
"And *I*," the saucy gourd replied;
"Am at the most a hundred hours,
"And overtop thee in the bowers!"

Through all the palm tree's leaves there went
A tremor as of self-content.
"I live my life," it, whispering, said;
"See what I see, and count the dead.
And every year, of all I've known,
A gourd above my head has grown,
And made a boast, like thine to-day;
Yet here *I* stand—but where are *they*?"

BEAUTIFUL IN OLD AGE.

How to be beautiful when old?
I can tell you, maiden fair—
Not by lotions, dyes, and pigments,
Not by washes for your hair.
While you're young be pure and gentle,
Keep your passions well controll'd,
Walk, and work, and do your duty,
You'll be handsome when you're old.

Snow white locks are fair as golden,
Grey as lovely as the brown,
And the smile of age more pleasant
Than a youthful beauty's frown.
'Tis the soul that shapes the features,
Fires the eye, attunes the voice;
Sweet sixteen! be these your maxims,
When you're sixty you'll rejoice!

NATIVE TRIBES OF NEW MEXICO.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

Among the Pimas the productions are chiefly maize, wheat, beans, melons, pumpkins, onions, chilli colorado (red pepper), &c.; they own a small quantity of stock, horned cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, mules, and poultry. They rely, however, for support chiefly upon agricultural productions, milk, and eggs. So much in excess are their productions above their requirements, that they dispose annually of more than a million bushels of grain to the government agents, at from four to six cents a pound, which, in our money, is nearly twopence. They used to grow cotton, but now they find it far easier to buy the few goods they require. Major Emory, of the United States regular army, was, I believe, the first American to visit this people in 1846, when, as Lieutenant Emory, he took charge of a military reconnaissance from Fort Leavenworth to San Diego on the Pacific. He thus describes the scene: "We had no sooner encamped, eight or nine miles from the Pimas villages, than we met a Maricopa Indian looking for his cattle. The frank confident manner in which he approached us was a strange contrast to that of the suspicious Apaches. Some six or eight of the Pimas came up soon after at full speed, to ascertain who we were and what we wanted. They told us that the first trail we had seen along the river was that of their people, sent to watch the movements of their enemies, the Apaches. Their joy was unaffected at seeing that we were Americans and not Apaches, and word to that effect was immediately sent back to the chief. Although the nearest villages were nine miles distant, our camp in three hours was filled with Pimas loaded with corn, beans, honey, and water-melons, so that a brisk trade was opened at once. Their mode of approach was perfectly frank and unsuspicious; many would leave their packs in our camp and be absent for hours, theft seeming to be unknown to them. On reaching the villages we were at once impressed with the beauty, order, and disposition of the arrangements for irrigating and draining the land. Maize,

wheat, and cotton are the crops raised by this peaceful and intelligent race of people; all had just been gathered in, and the stubbles showed that they had been luxurious. The cotton was picked and stacked for drying on the tops of the sheds. The fields are subdivided by ridges of earth into rectangles of about two hundred by one hundred feet, for the convenience of irrigating. The fences are of sticks, wattled with willow and mezquite, and in this particular are an example of economy in agriculture worthy to be followed by the Mexicans, who never use fences at all.

"In front of each dome-shaped hut is usually a large arbour, on the top of which is piled the cotton in the pod for drying. To us it was a rare sight to be thrown in the midst of a large tribe of what is termed wild Indians, surpassing many of the Christian nations in agriculture, little behind them in useful arts, and immeasurably before them in honesty and virtue. During the whole of yesterday our camp was full of men, women, and children, who sauntered amongst our packs unwatched, and not a single instance of theft was reported.

"I saw a woman seated on the ground under the shade of one of the cotton sheds; her left leg was tucked under her seat, and her foot turned sole upwards; between her big toe and the next was a spindle about eighteen inches long, with a single fly of four or six inches. Ever and anon she gave it a twist in a dexterous manner, and at its end was drawn a coarse cotton thread. This was their spinning jenny. Led on by this primitive display, I asked for their loom, by pointing to the thread and then to the blanket girt about the woman's loins. A fellow stretched in the dust sunning himself, rose up leisurely and untied a bundle which I had supposed to be a bow and arrows. This little package, with four stakes placed in the ground, was the loom. He laid open his cloth, and commenced the process of weaving."

The pottery manufactured by the Pimas varies in colour from red to dark brown; the articles made are limited to those which are absolutely necessary for domestic purposes. They consist of ollas or vases of every size, the largest containing about two pailfuls, the smallest half a pint; jars with small apertures resembling bottles, and basins of different sizes and shapes, from a milkpan to a saucer. All are more or less ornamented, and painted with black lines arranged in geometrical figures.

The basket-work is the most meritorious of all their native arts, for although the baskets are made only of willow twigs or of grass, so closely are they woven that liquids are placed in them as a matter of course, and seldom a drop escapes through the sides. A wicker rim is always fastened at the bottom, by which the larger baskets can be carried on the head like the vases, and the smaller ones can stand securely on the floor. They are of all sizes, and together with the pottery, form the great articles of exchange between this people and other tribes, the Mexicans being about the best customers of all. Their only native weapons are bows and arrows, but they readily adopt all modern appliances either in the shape of fire-arms or implements of agriculture. The United States government has, through its agents, supplied to them a considerable quantity of the latter during the last few years, by which means the annual produce of their farms has been greatly increased. As the ground is soft and friable, hoes, spades, and shovels are more in vogue than ploughs, and when one part of the valley shows signs of exhaustion they give it rest, repair the old acequias which had previously been abandoned, and thus bring a reinvigorated patch of waste land again under cultivation.

Altogether, I may safely say that the present state of these industrious people is very satisfactory. Want is unknown amongst them; they are happy and contented; they are of great assistance to the colonists as well as to the government, for they help to confine the Apaches to their mountain retreats, and they supply the emigrants and troops with large quantities of corn. By the table of population already given, it will be seen that the women and children form a very fair proportion of the population; as for the latter, my friend Colton tells me that the whole valley swarms with them, and that these little monkeys are as full of fun as they can be. All this is encouraging, and leads us to hope that this people may escape the general destruction which, in North America especially, has fallen upon the aboriginal tribes with the advance of the Anglo-Saxon race. That so desirable a consummation should be attained, two things are absolutely necessary:

First, that the government should make their lands by law inalienable.

Secondly, that the high standard of morality which has ever been remarkable amongst the Pimas and their neighbours, the Pueblo Indians, should not be broken down by any close intercourse with white men and their fire-water.

A word or two now about the Papagos.

The Papago country is large in extent, but for the most part a complete desert. It comprises all the country south of the Rio Gila, which lies between the head of the Gulf of California and that extensive Cordillera of which the Sierra Catarina forms the most westerly range, and extends for some fifty to a hundred miles into Sonora. All over this tract, wherever there happens to be a stream, a spring, or a little marsh amongst the barren rock hills which thrust their peaks above the parched and friable ground, or any spot favourably suited for tank irrigation, there you are very likely to find a little colony of Papagos, living in huts similar in all respects to those of the Pimas. I have been through their desolate country, and visited many of their villages, and I feel convinced that the hard struggle they have ever had with nature to support life in such a region, has done much to develop the energy and manliness of character peculiar to the tribe. As a race, they are the finest specimens of man, *physically*, I have ever seen; on one occasion I met five of them at a ranch, and not one of the party measured less than six feet two inches. If they were not so very dark in complexion, their features would be pleasing, for they have the steady, intelligent eye, and straightforward manners of their more northern brethren, the Pimas. The most interesting point about them, however, is their mode of life. Like the Jaqui Indians of Southern Sonora, they very willingly leave their homes at certain seasons to gain a livelihood elsewhere. They own flocks and herds in considerable quantities, and they keep large droves of horses, or rather ponies. It is probable that a number of their villages, especially those supplied only by artificial tanks, are uninhabitable, from want of water, for a great part of the year, so that they are obliged to migrate, to support themselves and their stock during the droughts; be that as it may, they have become the greatest traders and the most industrious people to be found in the country. When the time for leaving their little patches of cultivated ground around the villages has arrived, some pack their merchandise, consisting chiefly of baskets and pottery similar to those made by the Pimas, on their ponies, and go down to Sonora to trade with the Mexicans, driving their stock with them to pasture in the comparatively fertile valleys to the southward. Others travel immense distances over the great Sonora Desert to the Gulf of California, and particularly to some salt lakes about a hundred miles west of Altar, where they lay in a stock of salt and seashells, and then return to trade with the Indians on the Colorado, or the Pimas on the Gila; or to sell the salt to the Mexicans on the eastern side of their country. Others, who have no merchandise to sell or ponies to trade with, go to the settlements and ranches from Tucson southward, and willingly hire themselves out as field labourers or miners. They work well for the Americans, and receive usually a dollar a day, which is certainly not bad wages. Then when the time for planting comes round, they all return again to their own homes in the desert.

The Pimas resisted sternly all attempts made by the Jesuits or Franciscans to convert them, and are now so diffident on religious subjects, that they will not discuss them, or give any information respecting their belief; the Papagos, however, probably from the close intercourse which they have so long kept up with the Mexicans, are, to all appearance, most devout Roman Catholics. The cathedral of the tribe is the last relic left of the Papago mission of San Xaviere del Bac, and is situated on the Rio de Santa Cruz.

Intercourse with the Mexicans has also much modified their mode of dress, for the men usually wear wide straw sombreros of home manufacture, moccasins, buckskin gaiters, a breech cloth of cotton, and a snow-white cotton blanket thrown gracefully across the chest. The women wear petticoats, and neither sex seems to affect ornaments or paint. The number of villages scattered throughout the land of the Papagos is about nineteen, and the population of the entire tribe probably reaches four thousand, of which three thousand live north of the Mexican boundary line, and perhaps one thousand south of it. So effectively do the warriors protect their homes that the Apaches never have the courage to penetrate far into their country, although they have quite depopulated the Mexican settlements bordering it on the east.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

One of the most singular men who has ever appeared in the world of music and of musical literature has passed away, at the age of sixty-six. This was Hector Berlioz. If he did not even reach the allotted period of three score years and ten, it may have been because his life was somewhat prematurely consumed by emotions, ambitions, and disappointments. They were to be read in every line of a face never to be forgotten by those who can read faces, in every line which came from his pen. The story

of the life of Berlioz is a sad one—a story of defiance, followed by bitterness; but it is a story well worth being narrated, and taken to heart by every one concerned in such excitements as those to which his existence was devoted. A man more gifted (under restriction), and more perverse (without restriction), could hardly be named as belonging to that company of unhappy musicians which includes the names of such sufferers as Beethoven, Schumann, and Böhner. There are few, if any, survivors who can be distressed by the leading facts of his life being recounted plainly, yet in all tenderness to an unhappy man whose restless life has closed.

He was born, say the French obituary notices, at the Côte Saint André (department of L'Isère) on the 11th of December, 1803. His father, a physician of repute, tried to coerce or persuade the boy to embrace his own profession. It was all in vain. The boy had no vocation for "the healing art"—some instincts, obviously, for Music, but neither that patient and persistent humility, nor that brilliancy of instinctive genius, out of either of which a great career may be made. The extreme crudity of his first compositions is warrant for the slenderness of his knowledge no less than his audacity. And yet we are assured that, on his escape to Paris, he studied under that most formal of theorists, Reicha. For a time, we now learn, he figured as a chorister at the Opéra Comique, probably enduring much privation. He gained admittance to the Conservatoire in 1826. After producing his overture to Waverley, and a portentous piece of pompous cacophony, the symphony entitled Episode dans la vie d'un Artiste, he put forth a cantata on the subject of Sardanapalus. This gained the prize which entitled him, as Laureate, to a couple of years' residence and study at Rome. What he learned—or, rather, say, what he failed to learn—in Italy he has told, in the language of derision, in his Reminiscences. How different in this was he from Mendelssohn, who, in the writer's presence, on hearing musical Rome and the doings in Rome derided, said: "Well, but for the artist there is always Rome to be learned." And yet that Berlioz was as sensible of the influences of the atmosphere of the Eternal City as was the more genial and grateful Prussian, his own writings show unmistakably. His best inspirations are clearly referable to his sojourn in the south, such as his overture to Le Carnaval Romain, his March of Pilgrims in the Abruzzi, and his entire opera Benvenuto Cellini. From Rome Berlioz brought, as fruits of his residence there, his strange overture to King Lear, and a symphony entitled Return to Life. Among the writer's first musical recollections are the astonishment and derision which these inspired on their assaulting the prudish and pedantic connoisseurs of Paris, who were even then reluctantly annealing their ears to receive, without a shiver of disgust, the compositions given out by Beethoven in his golden prime. It may be, however, that one so presumptuous as young Berlioz fancied that it was better to be talked about, it matters not how, than to be passed over, as a respectable mediocrity. But no other instance could be named in the annals of Music of a like intrepidity (to use the gentlest of epithets) at the outset of any artist's career. How, little by little, Berlioz gained a certain hold on French curiosity, cannot be told in detail here; no small part of his advancement must be ascribed to the sharpness of his tongue, and (so soon as he entered on journalism) to the poignancy of his pen. Further, his intellect and poetical sympathy with other subjects than music, were quick, and directed to original forms of research and exercise. Foremost among these must be noted, as a marked characteristic, that enthusiastic profession of devotion to Shakespeare, which had a large influence on his life and writings. This was evidenced at an early period of his career. A company of English actors was then endeavouring to introduce our dramatist's plays to a sound appreciation in Paris. At the head of the troop was Miss Smithson. With her the young Frenchman fell passionately in love. His suit was coldly received by our tragedy queen, then in the hey-day of her fame. Miss Smithson's career as an actress, however, was cut short by a severe personal accident. On this the constant enthusiast came gallantly forward and renewed his addresses. They were listened to the second time, and Berlioz carried off the prize for which he had so earnestly longed. The marriage was not a happy one, and the unhappiness brought on consequences of estrangement and entanglement which spoiled the later years of the artist. His second wife was Mademoiselle Recio, of the Opéra Comique—a nullity in point of musical and dramatic power, whom few frequenters of that theatre can recollect ever to have seen or heard of. The second marriage proved no happier for the composer than his first had been.

His life was further marked by incidents and associations, strange as belonging to one so severe, and so critical, and who so vehemently denounced everything like charlatanry. It is singular that a man like Paganini, whose music is so regular in its southern ordinance, and who was notoriously miserly and reserved, should have been so bewitched by the young Frenchman's eccentricities, as to attest his delight by making him a magnificent present of money. This, it may be added, could not have arrived more opportunely. A large portion of the donation was spent in the production of his Romeo and Juliet symphony. Later when M. Berlioz was in England, he associated himself to a charlatan, in his sphere, as pretending as the professed artist—the never-to-be-forgotten Jullien. The same irregularity was to be traced in other of his friendships and professed antipathies.

It is impossible to offer anything like a complete list of his works. It comprises three grand symphonies: L'Episode dans la vie d'un Artiste, Harold in Italy, and, best, longest, and latest of the three, the Romeo and Juliet symphony, which, like Beethoven's ninth symphony, is partially choral. There is more than one grand mass; there are several overtures from his pen. There are three operas: Benvenuto Cellini, Beatrice et Benedict (noticeable

for the graceful duet-notturno, which closes the first act), and Les Troyens, the immoderate length of which rendered the performance of only half the work a necessity. Berlioz probably hoped, as Herr Wagner has since done, that the different portions of the same dramatic tale should be performed on consecutive evenings. Another resemblance by the way exists between him and Herr Wagner; in the two last-named works, the libretti, containing some very graceful verses, were from the musician's own hand. To furnish the text for himself, became habitually the practice of Berlioz. Then there is his small oratorio, La Fuite en Egypte—as odd a specimen of combination by haphazard as is registered in the annals of the art. With the after-confessed purpose of satire and mystification, M. Berlioz had written a short scene bearing the above title, with an overture, signing the same with a pseudonyme, Pierre Ducre. Strange to say, this music, produced to mock at everything "calm and classical," was found so exceptionally comprehensible and melodious, that its writer was counselled to extend the work, by showing, as preface, the motive of the flight in the persecutions of Herod, and, as close, the relief of the fugitives on arriving at the land of rest and promise. Berlioz grasped at the suggestion eagerly; and shortly, to words of his own, produced a first and a third part. This additional matter, bearing not the remotest resemblance to the tunable and elegant music which suggested its production, is a marvel of ugliness and eccentricity. As a whole, the oratorio is therefore unproducible, and has nowhere succeeded.

One of the most interesting, most characteristic, and most unequal of the works of M. Berlioz is his Faust cantata. How that imperishable legend has tempted some of our best musicians, and what the varieties of its treatment have been, were sketched in this journal some time ago. To avoid recapitulation, it shall only be now said, that the best portions of the cantata, are the scene in the fields which opens the work, the "Flea" song of Mephistopheles and the chorus of Sylphs over the sleeping Faust. The Easter church music is arid without the slightest unction, the soldiers' and students' chorus, forced and uncouth to the last degree, the weird night ride of the Tempter and the Lover hideous and hardly to be executed, so rapid is the music, so harsh are the modulations. The closing apotheosis is mawkish; neither sweet nor elevated. Such chances of acceptance as might have been expected for a work, the tone of which is so pervadingly and prevailingly grim, have probably been swept away—once for all—by the great and universal success of M. Gounod's Faust, an opera which has stood the brunt of national abuse and home jealousy, and has passed everywhere throughout Europe.

Thus much of M. Berlioz as a creative musician. As a writer of substantive works, on subjects connected with his art, his value is limited. Of these the most important in appearance is his Treatise on Instrumentation. With all his feeling for sonority, this work makes it obvious, that that which is extreme and odd had the largest share of his sympathies. Many of the examples are drawn from the most overstrained portions of his least happy works: such, for instance, as his Tempest cantata, in which the unmeaning chant of Miranda is smothered beneath the weight of an enormous orchestra, which, besides his favourite harps, includes a pair of grand pianos. His idea of the normal organ was derived from the huge, shrieking, encumbered yet essentially feeble machines by Cliquot and Dallery, which made such a huge show and an intolerable noise in the churches of Notre Dame, Sainte Eustache, and Saint Sulpice. It is needless to illustrate further. In respect to the singer's art, his judgment was no less peremptory and unsound, being based on the idea of trampling under foot every idea of free will, spontaneous inspiration, and grace, and reducing the interpreting artist to the condition of a bond slave—no matter what might be the peculiarities or limits of his organisation—no matter what his tendencies in "reading," as the dramatists have it, might be. Some of his arabesques and travelling sketches are smart enough, though many of them are obviously instinct with a personality which must largely destroy an impartial reader's faith in their truthfulness.

As regards his more serious criticisms it cannot be too strongly insisted on, that as a critical musican, who pretended to be in advance of his time, Berlioz was ignorant, insolent, and, it must be added, insincere. Perpetually appealing, as he did, to the highest standards, with an asperity which only the most extended knowledge could justify, he fell into one bad fashion of the time, which has been to deify Bach at Handel's expense: and yet the writer heard from Mendelssohn himself, that Berlioz, while at Leipzig, after receiving and retaining for many days certain manuscripts of the great Cantor existing in the *Thomas Schule*, and to examine which he had expressed the greatest curiosity, returned the packet at last with the seals unbroken! "Yet," said Mendelssohn, quietly, "he gave his opinion about them just the same." Of Handel's music he knew absolutely next to nothing. He laughed Haydn to scorn, as a pedantic old baby in music; ignoring the wondrous combinations of fancy and science of that father of instrumental composition. Mozart fared with him yet worse. He could not be persuaded to hear Elijah to the end. Of course, the Italians, one and all, being melodists, had to bear the brunt of his bitterest injustice; one alone excepted, whom he exalted to the skies. This was Spontini, in whose praise he could never use language too glowing, Spontini being one of the driest of melodists. Of Cherubini he spoke with great reserve and caution. Neither of these, however, can be justly rated as composers of the pure Italian school, as Cimarosa and Paisiello had been. He mowed down Rossini's choruses Faith, Hope, and Charity, thus—"His Hope has cheated ours—his Faith does not move mountains—as to his Charity, it will not ruin him." Most curious in its inconsistency was the severe judgment

passed by him on the music of a kindred spirit, Herr Wagner: yet he could write that amazing opera, Les Troyens.

The creative, the critical, and the presiding artist were alike incomplete. When Berlioz was in London as a professed conductor, he had no scruple in more than once standing before an orchestra to superintend the performance of music which he had never rehearsed, nor even perused, such as Mendelssohn's violin concertos. Yet who could write more glibly and sonorously about sincerity and conscience in art than he could? Who be more intensely sarcastic on the slovenly proceedings of those who protested nothing, as compared with himself? In brief, as an example of arrogance in censure, and carelessness in preparation, Berlioz, as a critic, cannot be too plainly characterised for the guidance and warning of those who take on them the responsibility of dealing out praise and blame, and of lecturing a younger generation on the truths, beauties, and purposes of Art.

When, however, Berlioz was in one of his quieter and less antagonistic moods, and confined himself to the very few subjects he had mastered, he could be brilliant, original, and instructive. His criticisms on Gluck's music, whether written or spoken, were deep, truthful, and ingenious. Next in his favour stood the compositions of Beethoven's decay time. After these came the music of Weber. It will be remembered that, to qualify Der Freischütz to appear on the stage of grand French Opera, where spoken dialogue is not allowed, he composed musical recitatives. The confusion of these, and their utter absence of charm or dramatic expression, can hardly be overrated.

When M. Berlioz cared to be so, he was admirable as an orchestral conductor—fiery, delicate, precise, and animating; gesticulating, it may be, a little too much, but obviously so thoroughly in earnest, that his directions and gestures had not the offence which always attaches itself to feigned enthusiasm. The only instrument with which he was practically conversant was the guitar. Of the organ, as has been said, he knew nothing. He praised the harp to the skies, and his use of that picturesque, but restricted instrument, was original and effective. Unless memory has strangely exaggerated the facts, at the execution of some numbers of the Romeo and Juliet symphony in London, a squadron of ten harps was called in, to be used only in the movement, "The Fête of the Capulets." He had ideas of monstrous combinations: of four distant orchestras or more, brought under simultaneous control by the agency of the electric telegraph. Yet what was the most gigantic and ambitious of his devices compared with the orchestra of cannons, by the platoon-firing of which Sarti timed his Te Deum, composed on the occasion of the taking of Ocsakow by the Russians?

To sum up, the artistic career of Berlioz, cannot be called either a healthy or a happy one. He was devoured by aspirations. One so shrewd as himself, however, must have felt, in the secrecy of self-examination, that there was no chance of his ever realising them permanently. Sterile in melody, incomplete in science, with a vague, yet passionate sense that something was yet to be done in music, especially in the combination of sounds, as distinguished from the arrangements and expression of thoughts, he bent himself to tasks of a difficulty altogether impossible to overcome. Taking the works of Beethoven's last unhappy years as his point of departure, he tried to improve on his model—forgetting, in the violence of his resolution, that Beethoven's crudest and least well-cemented works, flung out during a period of misery and defiance, still contain a treasure of original ideas which no uncouth treatment or maltreatment could conceal, still less annihilate. It is perfectly true, that he was indulged with occasional outbursts of patronage, as in Russia, Vienna, Baden-Baden, and Weimar. But these, it may be fairly asserted, failed to place him in the solid position of European fame which he coveted. His greatest admirers, as was once pithily remarked, were those who the least understood music. It may be doubted, without any undue scepticism, whether works, so slender in idea, so elaborately and awkwardly overwrought as his, will be long thought worth the trouble of reproduction, now that the personality of their author as a superintendent, the sarcasms of his tongue, and the severities of his pen, are no more.

MELUSINA.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

It surprised none of the keen-eyed Golden Islanders that Mrs. Magniac shortly exchanged her name for that of Fonnereau—and reigned at Mon Désir.

To do the lady justice, she betrayed no atom of triumph. Mistress, of course, she was—and mistress she evidently intended to be—but Geraldine had abdicated with a grace and promptitude that left nothing to desire; and Melusina repaid her with a gushing tenderness nothing short of maternal—finding herself, in turn, amply recompensed by the increasing gratitude and confidence of her husband.

Her influence over the latter augmented, almost daily. Poor Geraldine, while unable to point to any one act or word, on the part of her stepmother, to justify her suspicion, became sensible that she was gradually undermining the attachment that had hitherto subsisted between her father and herself. If this conviction—always bitterly present to her mind—occasionally tinged her speech, Melusina would meet it with a patient smile—or, what was more intolerable, a glance of intelligent appeal, to her husband—which, if it produced no present result, satisfied Geral-

dine that she would form an early subject of discussion between the pair.

Unluckily, the overbearing conduct of La Pareuse, at this time begat dissensions in the lower house. This woman had conceived a violent aversion to Geraldine's maid—and so malignant and threatening was her demeanour, that the young lady deemed it best to allow the girl to seek another situation.

In departing, the latter, who was much attached to Geraldine, wept bitterly. Miss Fonnereau consoled her.

"'Tain't for myself, miss," sobbed Alice. "Don't ye comfort *me*—but do—oh, do as *I*'m a-doing.—Go!"

Geraldine long remembered the strange, wistful look the girl bent upon her, as she hurried from the room and house.

A well-timed incident now occurred. Geraldine received a pressing invitation from the kind Superior of the convent in which she had passed so many happy days, to revisit that tranquil spot.

Reluctant, indeed, to leave her father—yet growing, hourly, less content at home—Geraldine overbore the faint opposition that was made to her acceptance of the proposal—and quickly found herself once again among the loving sisterhood.

Weeks soon grew to months, and there was no talk of Geraldine's return (indeed, at this time no pretext was required, as the young lady, suffering from a severe sprain, was unable to quit the sofa), when a letter, containing another for Geraldine, reached the Superior. It was from Mrs. Fonnereau, and entreated that the sad tidings she had to communicate might be carefully broken to her dear child.

Colonel Fonnereau had died suddenly.

Nothing could be more tender and considerate than the language of this letter. Mrs. Fonnereau was evidently heart-stricken by her sudden bereavement, and found consolation only—next Heaven—in the hope of shortly mingling her tears with those of her beloved child.

"You have an earthly mother yet, my love," remarked the kind Superior, through her tears, as she folded up the letter.

Disabled from looking once more upon the benign face, thus suddenly turned away, Geraldine preferred the consolations she had already found, and without proposing to return home, waited patiently for whatever fate Heaven should send her.

It now transpired that the colonel's affairs were in a more prosperous condition than he had supposed. Certain shares, which Fonnereau, an indifferent man of business, had laid aside as comparatively worthless, turned out to be of considerable market value. More unexpected still, the defaulting agent, who had carried with him a part of the purchase-money of the West India estate, in a form not easy to negotiate, soothed his conscience to a certain extent, by restoring the same.

These incidents, unluckily, only followed the colonel's death. Unaware that his available assets quadrupled the loan he had accepted from Melusina, the honest gentleman by his will bequeathed every shilling that remained to him, in reduction of that debt. Lastly—"confiding absolutely," said the will, "in the oft-repeated promise of my dear wife that she will ever regard and treat my beloved daughter as if the latter were her own child—I commit our Geraldine to her sole control and guardianship, until she shall come of age or be married."

The Lady of the Sea had won indeed!

The discovery of her position was a thunderstroke to Geraldine, and cost her bitter tears. The loss of her inheritance she might have borne, since it seemed, in a measure, due to accident; but that her father, so loving and considerate, should have delivered up his darling, bound hand and foot, to the woman whom, alone of all living, she hated, and whose objects she had openly, though vainly, opposed, *this* proved the existence of some sinister power which might still be exerted to her harm.

There was no help—but there was hope. Melusina's nature might have benefited by later associations. Her language was open and affectionate. Geraldine felt that she might be doing her injustice. Nevertheless, she clung instinctively to her present happy refuge, and would have been content to remain for ever. At last, however, the summons came.

Mrs. Fonnereau wrote that she had disposed of Mon Désir, and engaged a residence better suited to their feelings and circumstances. It was a large old mansion known as "Leafy Dell," situated in a very quiet neighbourhood, where she and her child might, with little interruption, enjoy the sad but sweet remembrance of happy days gone by. Geraldine must (she added with sweet authority) give her first proof of duty by joining her there immediately.

This was accompanied by a letter to the Superior, to the same effect; with the addition that the writer, in accordance with a promise given to her husband, in his last hours, intended to withdraw, for the present, from the world, and devote herself, wholly

and exclusively, to the training, education, and general welfare of his child.

Again the kind Superior acknowledged, with tears, the honesty of purpose that could induce a person of Mrs. Fonnereau's tastes and habits, to act as she proposed.

But Geraldine's pale cheeks flushed.

"Education!" she repeated, slowly—"I am sixteen!—Training!—*Hers?*"

The Superior hinted something about "finishing masters."

"In that neighbourhood, my mother!" said Geraldine, gloomily.

Her friend found it difficult to comfort the poor girl. The very prospect of the exclusive companionship of Melusina—without mention of her strange, repulsive follower—was abhorrent to her. There was but one reassuring reflection:

"Your father must have loved her," said the Superior.

And Geraldine went.

If Leafy Dell was situated in a "quiet neighbourhood," it had its own excellent reasons. People do not, as a rule, prefer to reside in the immediate vicinity of a madhouse, and such, up to a recent period, had been the character of the dwelling Mrs. Fonnereau had selected. The establishment had been mismanaged. There were dark rumours of maltreatment of the unhappy inmates. At all events, it was broken up, and reorganised elsewhere, the proprietor trusting to a low rent, and the really beautiful, but gloomy and neglected grounds, to find more eligible occupants.

Any one peeping into the vast drawing-room of Leafy Dell, at this time, might have seen Mrs. Fonnereau in close consultation with a lady tall of stature—with stern, handsome features, and a hand which, as it lay open on the table, showed white as snow, yet large and muscular as that of a man.

She was there in consequence of an advertisement which (for we write no fiction) may be read in the Times of that date.

"Governess Wanted. To undertake the undivided charge, and complete the education of a pupil whose mind and talents have been misdirected—whose nature is morose and difficult—and for whose improvement the union of womanly instruction with *masculine firmness* is absolutely essential. Qualities adapted to this exceptional case will command a most liberal reward. Address, &c."

To judge by the countenances and mutual demeanour of the pair, their acquaintance, though but a few hours old, had ripened into an excellent understanding. Their confidence almost resembled conspiracy—else, why—when the hollow-sounding house-bell announced an arrival—should they start, and exchange a meaning grasp of the hand—followed by the abrupt departure of the strange, strong woman from the room?

Mrs. Fonnereau received Geraldine with a tenderness only qualified by that sweet maternal superiority that became her new position towards the lonely girl. Her stepchild liked this better—it was more real—and began to think the intercourse would prove more tolerable than her fears foretold. She resolved to do her utmost to love the woman her father had loved, and with whom her lot seemed inevitably cast.

As they sat together in the dusk, awaiting dinner, Mrs. Fonnereau began to speak of "education."

"I declare you have grown quite French, my love," she said, laughing sweetly, but a little reprovingly.

"French is almost my natural tongue," said Geraldine, quietly. "Little else is spoken by the sisters."

"We must forget the sisters," returned her stepmother. "Your dear father was thoroughly English. His tastes, habits, and wishes were my law. We shall, I trust, undo much that has been mislearned, and commence anew. And take note, sweet one, I shall expect implicit obedience! Not one rebellious word!"

"I have been accustomed to consider my education completed, mad—mamma, that is," said Geraldine, haughtily. "May I ask in what I am to benefit by your instruction?"

"In nothing, love," replied Melusina. "Mine is but an affectionate supervision. I leave all *that* to Mrs. Manning."

"Mrs. Manning!"

"Your governess."

"Governess!" repeated Miss Fonnereau. "A governess? *For me?*"

Melusina uttered a little silvery laugh, and her eyes sent a cat-like glance through the darkening room. She made no other reply.

"Please to remember," resumed Geraldine, her bosom heaving, "that I am already a woman."

"Do not make me forget it, dear," replied her stepmother, sweetly. "Want of filial obedience and docility must be reckoned as childish faults, and dealt with accordingly."

"Want of——I do not understand you," said Geraldine, rising.

"Hush—I beg! Compose yourself, my

dear," said her stepmother, in a reassuring tone. "Do not alarm our good Mrs. Manning, who will be here in a moment, with so early a display of what I must call—temper. Please to remember, in your turn, that your father, dear soul! confided you to my sole care. You have—have we not *all?*—faults to correct, deficiencies to make good. Alone, I am unequal to such a task. I have therefore——Hush, here she is."

The door had opened, and Mrs. Manning's stately figure moved darkly up the room. Geraldine felt that there was something imposing in the stern yet gracious manner of her greeting, and, overawed despite herself, went through the ceremony of introduction as though in a dream.

That evening was a strange one to Geraldine. The novelty of her position, the manner of her companions, her own doubt and sorrow, her wounded pride—these, altogether, cowed her spirit. Some irresistible power seemed to be compelling her, struggle as she would, to accept the circumstances in which fate had placed her. What if she did? Only for a short time longer; she was past sixteen. Could they pretend to treat her as a child? A prompt and cheerful acquiescence might be the wiser course. And with that resolution, made on her pillow, the poor child wept herself to sleep, and dreamed of her father.

The next day lessons began. Mrs. Manning examined her, calmly and rigidly, neither praising her acquirements nor noticing shortcomings; then, briefly laying out a general plan of study, supplied her with the needful books, and left her to tasks of no slight description. Her manner, without actual severity, was hard and distant. Nevertheless, Geraldine did not despair of conciliating her, and, in pursuance of her overnight determination, applied herself heartily to her work.

Her reward was a half smile, and a glance which at once expressed surprise and taught Geraldine that her governess's aim had been to test her abilities to the utmost.

Later the three walked in the sombre grounds, Melusina cold, but gentle; Mrs. Manning lofty and didactic; Geraldine sad and thoughtful, with a singular prescience of some impending evil whose nature she could not divine. One thing only was clear. It was intended to make her understand that she was a child again, without independence of movement or of mind. She could not repress a shudder as she glanced at the dismal mansion, with its huge strong portals and barred casements, and noticed that through the gloomy avenues that encircled it no human dwelling was visible.

The next day, and the next, and the next, Miss Fonnereau observed that her lessons were gradually augmented. Also, that her governess, far from commending her proficiency, seemed rather disappointed at finding no cause of rebuke; still she worked on. The company of her hardest books was preferable to that of Melusina, who affected to have no business, uninvited, in what was called the "schoolroom."

One morning Geraldine, in replying to her governess, made use (as she had often done before) of a French expression.

"Speak English, if you please, Miss Fonnereau," said Mrs. Manning, corrugating her stern white brows.

"It is so habitual with me," pleaded Geraldine.

"No reply. I have warned you," said Mrs. Manning.

Geraldine coloured, and glanced at her preceptress. Again, the sense of her helpless position seemed to chain her tongue. She bowed her head, and again promised herself to do what she might to obey.

Habits, however, are not to be overcome at a word. Next morning the dreadful offence was repeated.

"This is unfortunate," said the governess, coldly, and closing the book she had in her hand. "I must correct you."

"Correct *me!*" exclaimed Geraldine, flushing scarlet. "For what? And how?"

"For disobedience. With *this*," was the deliberate reply.

Mrs. Manning rose, and going to a cabinet, unlocked it, and produced a small and thin, but spiteful-looking, riding-rod.

The sight of the humiliating instrument was too much.

"Great heavens, madam!" cried Geraldine, starting up; "are you going to assault me?"

"Bare your neck and shoulders," answered Mrs. Manning, composedly as ever. "*We* call it chastisement."

"I will die first!" exclaimed Geraldine, bursting into a passion of tears. "I am going to acquaint Mrs. Fonnereau of this outrage."

"That may be best," replied Mrs. Manning. And she laid down the whip.

Melusina was tranquilly at work, when Geraldine, panting and weeping, burst into the room, and related the insult she had received.

Mrs. Fonnereau's slightly enamelled features betrayed no sympathy. She even

smiled. This, however, passed, and she looked steadily at the agitated girl.

"Geraldine, my dear, you quite forget yourself. You call upon me, with authority, to dismiss this excellent lady, whose aid I have, at great personal sacrifice to myself, secured on your behalf. Her invariable condition is, that no one interferes with her system of education. To resist is to lose her. I have been compelled to pay her highly, in advance. Dismissal is out of the question. But what I can do I will. Let us go back to her."

She drew her stepchild's arm within her own. It felt like the coil of a snake. The reception of her just complaint had given shape to her indefinite misgiving. Geraldine was already convinced that a secret understanding existed between the two women to degrade and mortify—perhaps maltreat her. What was to be done?

"For *my* sake, dear Mrs. Manning," said Melusina, with a sweet, entreating smile, as they re-entered, "you will forgive my wilful one—*will* you not?"

"At your request. For this time," replied that imperturbable lady. Then, turning icily to her pupil: "Music next, if you please."

The next morning, Geraldine, the tumult of whose mind had rendered her unfit for study, found her tasks once more augmented. She lost heart, and, on a sharp reproof from her governess, flung down the book, declaring she could do no more. If she intended to kill her, she might.

"I do not destroy; I mend," said Mrs. Manning, unimpassioned as ever. And once more the riding-rod appeared.

"By what right do you offer me this outrage, defenceless as I am?" cried Geraldine, indignantly. "You are stronger than I, it is true; but lay one finger on me, and I will shriek till I am heard and rescued."

"Spare your cries," replied the governess. "There is no one within hearing of this house who will not disregard them. As for my strength—look here."

She caught Geraldine's wrists in one hand.

The action manacled her, as it were, with rings of steel. Nor that alone; it seemed to paralyse her entire frame. At the same moment the woman fixed her great gloomy eyes upon her with a stare so concentrated and manacing, that the poor girl, sickening with terror, felt as if she were in the clutches of some furious beast.

"Spare me!" she gasped. "I will—will obey!"

"Well for yourself that you have done so. Bare your neck and shoulders."

Mrs. Manning released the trembling hands, which had hardly strength to do the office commanded. They did it at length; and Geraldine's fair neck and round pearl-white shoulders received the first angry touch they had ever known. The strokes were few, perhaps slight; but each elicited a low cry—the plaint of wounded delicacy, not of pain.

Then her governess locked up the whip, and left the room.

It would be useless to dwell upon the anguish of the succeeding moments. The thought that *she*—the tenderly-nurtured child, the darling of the kind convent sisterhood, the grown accomplished woman—should be exposed to the punishment of a child—worse, of a slave! Geraldine gazed wildly round, and waved her arms as if for help. Then the thought of escape occurred. She flew to the barred casement.

There, without, as if anticipating her intend, stood, like a motionless sentinel, the horrible La Pareuse! Geraldine fancied she saw upon her ghastly face a grin of exultation. From that moment she felt her situation hopeless.

In effect, the victory was already gained. An idea that they intended to render her mad, and, if thwarted, might use some dreadful violence, took possession of her perturbed mind. She ceased to resent or oppose the orders given her.

Mrs. Manning did not use her triumph nobly. She increased the tasks, she repeated (and increased) the correction, until, one day, mad with pain and shame, Geraldine broke in upon her stepmother, and, turning her beautiful wealed shoulders to her gaze:

"See!" she exclaimed—"cruel heartless woman! See how I am used under your roof—perhaps with your sanction—the child of the man whose wishes were your law—*your* law! Is *this* your tenderness and care? Did you take my inheritance—almost, alas! my father's love—away from me, and are these shameful lashes your inhuman return?"

Melusina turned her green lambent eyes slowly on the speaker.

"And you dare address this speech to me?" she said, in a low creeping tone, and, rising, seemed to uncoil like a surprised snake that shows its fangs. "Reproaches to *me?* complaints to *me?* Then take the truth. Do you conceive, you little fool, that I have not read you from

the first—that I was insensible to the hatred and contempt you dared to feel towards a woman every way your superior? —your disparagement of me to your simple fool of a father?—your arts and wiles to defeat my marriage? No, girl. I knew them all. It was a doubtful battle, but you are defeated, and I have you prisoner, bound and fettered. I hate you. Do you hear? Your shame and sufferings are of my invention. I took this solitary den, I hired this truculent woman to help me to humble your proud heart, destroy your beauty, degrade you, body and soul, at my feet. Yes, my pet—my 'pussy,' as you loved to be called—the 'mermaid' has got the better of the cat, and she cannot save her glossy skin! To your keeper!"

Geraldine had scarcely heard the concluding words. Stricken with surprise and terror, she had sunk in a senseless heap on the floor.

A severe illness followed, of which she remembered little. When she recovered, a change had come over her whole being. Her loveliness had faded, but the change in her whole system was more touching still. Her high spirit had departed. Oppressed and hopeless, she submitted wearily to any tyranny the two women chose to inflict.

At length even Mrs. Manning, the impassive, began to tire. She had, at least, the doubtful merit of disliking non-resistance. As a beast of prey, she was of that nobler sort that prefers a hunt and a scuffle.

Passing near Geraldine's room, one day, and fancying she heard her voice, she looked in. The inmate was kneeling at the window, her thin hands clasping the bars.

"What are you doing, my dear?" inquired the governess, tenderer than usual, she knew not why.

Geraldine turned her white worn face to her.

"Trying to forgive you!" she answered.

Her governess looked fixedly at her, and retired without a word.

Five minutes later she walked, with her usual measured stateliness, into the drawing-room.

"I am sorry," she said to Mrs. Fonnereau, "to seem abrupt, but I leave you this day."

"To return—when?"

"Never."

"Never? And—the money—the three hundred?"

"Is here," said Mrs. Manning, placing some notes upon the table, with her habitual grace—"excepting only the wages of an upper domestic, which I have ventured to retain. I may be an instrument of severity; my necessities may have tempted me to become one of revenge; but I am opposed, on principle, to murder; and, with permission, these words shall be our last."

She curtseyed, and, in ten minutes, had quitted Leafy Dell.

"It matters not," said Melusina, to herself. "Money saved. I can manage her alone, *now*."

Let us draw the veil over the cruelty that ensued. It is possible that Mrs. Manning's sinister augury might have been fulfilled. But rescue was at hand, and coming fast, from an unexpected quarter.

The reader may remember the name of a certain Lieutenant Haldimand, R.N., who, at a certain pic-nic, had made the acquaintance of Miss Fonnereau. He had never forgotten the beautiful girl, and, with a constancy rarely seen in these later times, embraced the very first opportunity to revisit the isle that contained his treasure. He traced her to the convent. He traced her to Leafy Dell. While devising means for renewing his acquaintance, hitherto of the slightest, with the inmates of that residence, he, as by special providence, fell in with Alice Corham, Geraldine's faithful maid, who, in consequence of some dark rumour concerning her beloved mistress, was hovering in the neighbourhood, hoping to obtain information.

That which she had to communicate so startled and alarmed young Haldimand, that, being a man of action, he rode straightway to Leafy Dell, and, entering almost unopposed, presented himself to Mrs. Fonnereau, as one charged with a mission to her step-daughter, with whom he politely begged an interview.

Melusina, on account of the "dear girl's" health, was compelled to refuse; but did so in her sweetest manner, and exercised so many fascinations, that the young man, puzzled, bewildered, and half admiring, began to think his informant in error, and, a little ashamed at having so misjudged the still beautiful creature before him, took reluctant leave.

"What fools are men!" soliloquised the victorious Melusina, as she gazed at her own face in the mirror that night, La Pareuse caressing her hair. "He has been idolising that miserable thing above: he showed me his errand and his heart at once! And for all that, I could win him from her. *I!*—ah! that would be the

crowning triumph! But then—these lines—these lines." And she touched her tinted cheek, where La Pareuse's utmost skill had failed in its combat with time!

The white negro stooped her woolly head to her mistress's ear, and whispered. The latter started, and gazed at her.

"You are jesting!"

"My life upon it. It is certain. The smoothness and beauty of a morning rose, *yourself*—again sixteen."

"La Pareuse, it is horrible."

"To *her*, madame means?" grinned the negro.

"To me. Tell me, La Pareuse, do they hang, in this land, for—for murder?" asked Mrs. Fonnereau.

"It is not murder. *I* will take care of this, my most lovely neck!" said La Pareuse, laying her finger, with unaffected love and admiration, on her mistress's. "But a few drops. Bright as a rose! *To-morrow?* he will come again to-morrow."

"To-morrow," replied Melusina, faintly. "Go, *now*."

Lieutenant Haldimand did come to-morrow. But he had learned more—*much* more—and being, as I have said, a man of action, came armed with two useful weapons, a doctor's certificate and a magistrate's search-warrant, and accompanied by the doctor himself, and a constable.

Proceeding to the back, or kitchen-entrance, the constable took charge of an alarmed young lady, who acted as scullion, and general drudge to La Pareuse. By her, they were directed straight to the apartment occupied by Miss Fonnereau, the door of which stood open.

With stealthy steps, the visitors approached. Heavy breathing, and moans were audible within. Another step, and La Pareuse could be seen, kneeling at the foot of Geraldine's bed. So intent was she on her occupation, that the doctor laid his hand upon her shoulder, before she was aware of his presence.

"Bleeding to death, ah!" he said, taking from her hand a basin half-filled, and, pushing the woman aside with his foot, hastily stanched the blood that was streaming from a vein punctured in each of the poor girl's white attenuated feet.

"Take her, constable," said Haldimand. "Now, woman, where is your fiend of a mistress?"

"Don't hurt me. It is not murder!" shrieked the woman. "She is not even hurt. I gave her a sleeping potion. Look—she is awaking!"

"Not hurt!" cried the indignant doctor. "Take blood from a shadow like that, and tell me she is not hurt!"

"We only borrowed it," said La Pareuse, sullenly.

"'*Borrowed*' it!" echoed the doctor.

"It was for my mistress, to keep her beautiful. Books say that if you touch your face with the living blood of a pure young thing like that, the beauty comes again."

"Books? Devils' books. Faugh!" growled the doctor. "Where's your mistress, you old witch?"

"At her toilette."

"Let us help. Come, Haldimand."

They ran down stairs.

"Go you first," said the doctor, pushing La Pareuse forward. The latter entered the chamber.

The next moment she uttered a shriek so piercing that it was heard, people said, at the distance of a mile. All rushed in.

The graceful figure of Melusina was seated at the toilette-table. She was leaning her cheek on her hand, but the finger tips were crimsoned, and the still and fearful face, reflected in the mirror, bore streaks and patches of the same hue. Instinctively the men shrunk back. There was little need of La Pareuse's shriek of agony.

"Dead! Dead! Dead!"

In the emotion of that horrible toilette, some vessel had given way, and her own blood had actually mingled with that which this wretched slave of vanity and passion was using, as she hoped, for her own adornment, and the success of an evil end.

Geraldine lived to regain her beauty, and reward her gallant rescuer, and Leafy Dell resembles its former self only in name.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read on Tuesday, April 27, at St. James's Hall, London; Thursday, April 29, Chester; Saturday, May 1 (Morning Reading), St. James's Hall, London; Monday, May 3, Cardiff; Tuesday, May 4, Swansea; Wednesday, May 5, Gloucester; Thursday, May 6, Hereford; Saturday Morning, May 8, St. James's Hall, London; Tuesday Evening, May 11, Saturday Morning, May 22, and Tuesday Evening, May 25, St. James's Hall, London.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XII. POOR PAPA'S SUCCESSOR.

It has been seen that Mr. Creswell's marriage with Marian Ashurst was sufficiently popular amongst the farmer class at Helmingham, but it was by no means so warmly received in other grades of society. Up at the Park, for instance, the people could scarcely restrain their indignation. Sir Thomas Churchill had always been accustomed to speak of "my neighbour, Mr. Creswell," as a "highly respectable man, sprung, as he himself does not scruple to own, from the people," chirrupped the old Sir Thomas, whose great-grandfather had been a tanner in Brocksopp, "but eminently sound in all his views, and a credit to the—ahem—commercial classes of the community." They sat together on the magistrates' bench, met on committees of charitable associations, and such like, and twice a year solemnly had each other to dinner to meet a certain number of other county people on nights when there was a moon, or, at least, when the calendar showed that there ought to have been one. In the same spirit old Lady Churchill, kindliest of silly old women, had been in the habit of pitying Marian Ashurst. "That charmin' girl, so modest and quiet; none of your fly-away nonsense about her, and clever, ain't she? I don't know about these things myself, but they tell me so, and to have to go into lodgin's, and all that; father a clergyman of the Church of England too!"—staunch old lady, never moving about without the Honourable Miss Grimstone's Church-service, in two volumes, in her trunk—"it really does seem too bad!" But when the news of the forthcoming marriage began to be buzzed about, and penetrated to the Park, Sir Thomas did not scruple to stigmatise his neighbour as an old fool, while my lady had no better opinion of Miss Ashurst than that she was a "forward minx." What could have so disturbed these exemplary people? Not, surely, the low passions of envy and jealousy? Sir Thomas Churchill, a notorious roué in his day, who had married the plainest-headed woman in the county for her money, all the available capital of which he had spent, could not possibly be envious of the fresh young bride, whom his old acquaintance was bringing home? And Lady Churchill, to whom the village gossips talked incessantly of the intended redecoration of Woolgreaves, the equipages and horses which were ordered, the establishment which was about to be kept up, the position in parliament which has to be fought for, and, above all, the worship with which the elderly bridegroom regarded the juvenile bride-elect—these rumours did not influence her in the bitter depreciation with which she henceforth spoke of the late schoolmaster's daughter? Of course not! The utterances of the baronet and his lady were prompted by a deep regard to the welfare of both parties, and a wholesome regret that they had been prompted to take a step which could not be for the future happiness of either, of course.

Mr. Benthall, who, it will be recollected, had succeeded the late Mr. Ashurst at the Helmingham school, and was comparatively new to the neighbourhood, took but little interest in the matter, so far as Miss Ashurst was concerned. He had a bowing acquaintance with her, but he had neither had the wish nor the opportunity of getting on more familiar terms. Had she married

any one else but Mr. Creswell, it would not have mattered one jot to the Rev. George Benthall; but, as it happened, Mr. Benthall had a certain amount of interest in the doings of the household at Woolgreaves, and the marriage of the chief of that household promised to be an important event in Mr. Benthall's life.

You could scarcely have found a greater difference between any two men than between James Ashurst and his successor. When James Ashurst received his appointment as head-master at Helmingham, he looked upon that appointment as the culmination of his career. Mr. Benthall regarded the head-mastership as merely a stepping-stone to something better. Mr. Ashurst threw his whole soul into his work. Mr. Benthall was content to get people to think that he was very hard-working and very much interested in his duties, whereas he really cared nothing about them, and slipped through them in the most dilettante fashion. He did not like work; he never had liked it. At Oxford he had taken no honours, made no name, and when he was nominated to Helmingham, every one wondered at the selection, except those who happened to know that the fortunate man was godson to one of the two peers who were life-governors of the school. Mr. Benthall found the Helmingham school in excellent order. The number of scholars never had been so large, the social status of the class which furnished them was undeniably good, the discipline had been brought to perfection, and the school had an excellent name in the county. It had taken James Ashurst years to effect this, but once achieved there was no necessity for any further striving. Mr. Benthall was a keen man of the world, he found the machine in full swing, he calculated that the impetus which had been given to it would keep it in full swing for two or three years, without the necessity for the smallest exertion on his part, and during these two or three years he would occupy himself in looking out for something better. What that something better was to be he had not definitely determined. Not another head-mastership, he had made up his mind on that point; he never had been particularly partial to boys, and now he hated them. He did not like parochial duty, he did not like anything that gave him any trouble. He did like croquet-playing and parsonical flirtation, cricket and horse exercise. He liked money, and all that money brings, and after every consideration, he thought the best and easiest plan to acquire it would be to marry an heiress.

But there were no heiresses in those parts, and very few marriageable girls. Mr. Benthall had met the two young ladies from Woolgreaves at several garden-parties, and had conceived a special admiration for Gertrude Creswell. Maud was far too grand, and romantic, and self-willed for his taste, but there was something in Gertrude's fresh face and quaint simple manner that was particularly pleasing to him. But after making careful inquiries, Mr. Benthall discovered that Miss Gertrude Creswell's chance of wealth was but small, she being entirely dependent on her uncle, whose affections were known to be entirely concentrated on his son. She might have a few thousand pounds perhaps, but a few thousand pounds would not be sufficient to enable Mr. Benthall to give up the school, and to live idle for the rest of his life. The notion must be given up, he feared. He was very sorry for it, for he really liked the girl very much, and he thought she liked him. It was a bore, a nuisance, but the other thing was impossible!

Then came Tom Creswell's death, and that gave affairs another aspect. There was no son now to inherit all the accumulated wealth. There were only the two nieces, between whom the bulk of the property would doubtless be divided. That was a much more healthy outlook for Mr. Benthall. If matters eventuated as he imagined, Miss Gertrude would not merely have a sufficiency but would be an heiress; and under this expectation Mr. Benthall, who had not seen much of the young ladies of Woolgreaves for some time, now took every opportunity of throwing himself in their way. These opportunities were tolerably frequent, and Mr. Benthall availed himself of them with such skill and success that he had finally made up his mind to propose for Gertrude Creswell's hand, with the almost certainty of acceptance, when the news came down to the village that Mr. Creswell was going to be married to Marian Ashurst. That was a tremendous blow! From what Mr. Benthall had heard about Miss Ashurst's character in the village, there was little doubt in his mind that she had deliberately planned this marriage with a view to the acquisition of fortune and position, and there was no doubt that she would hold to both. The chance of any inheritance for the girls was even worse than it would have been if Tom had

lived. In that case a sense of justice would have impelled the old gentleman to do something for his nieces, but now he would be entirely under the sway of this money-loving woman, who would take care to keep everything to herself. It was a confounded nuisance, for in regard to Gertrude Creswell Mr. Benthall had progressed considerably beyond the "liking" stage, and was really very much attached to her. What could be done? It would be impossible for him to marry a portionless girl. It would be utterly useless for him to ask her uncle to endow her, as Mr. Creswell would at once refer the question to his new wife, who—as he, Mr. Benthall, happened to know from one or two little scenes at which he had been present, and one or two little circumstances of which he had heard—was by no means lovingly inclined towards the young ladies who had become her step-nieces. It was horribly provoking, but Mr. Benthall could not see his way at all.

One evening, some two or three days after Mr. Creswell's marriage, Mr. Benthall was sitting in his study when there came a knock at the door, and a smart housemaid entering told him that Mrs. Covey had come back and would be glad to see her master. Mrs. Covey was an old woman who for many years had lived as cook with the Ashursts, and who, on their recommendation, had been accepted in a similar capacity by Mr. Benthall, on his assumption of office. But the old lady had been away from her work for some few weeks with a sharp attack of illness, which rendered her unfit for her duties, and she had been staying with a married daughter some miles on the other side of Brocksopp. A few days previously she had reported herself as cured, and as about to return to her place, and in due time she arrived at the school-house. Mr. Benthall was glad to hear of the old woman's safe return, not that he cared in the least about her, or any other old woman, but she understood the place, and did her duty well, and some of the boarders had given decided evidence of the unpopularity of Mrs. Covey's locum tenens by leaving their dinners untouched, and making their meals in furtive snatches from their lockers during school-hours of provisions purchased at the "tuck-shop." This sort of mutiny annoyed Mr. Benthall considerably, and consequently he was very glad to have the news of Mrs. Covey's recovery, and gave orders that she should be sent up to him at once.

Whatever might have been the nature of Mrs. Covey's illness, it certainly had not had the effect of toning down her complexion. She was a singularly red-faced old lady, looking as if constant exposure to large fires had sent the blood to her cheeks and kept it there, and she wore a very fierce little black front with two screwy little curls just in front of either ear, and in honour of her return and of her presentation to her master, she had put on a gigantic structure of net and ribbon which did duty for a cap. She seemed greatly pleased at the notice which Mr. Benthall took of her, and at the interest he seemed to show in her recovery, but nothing would induce her to be seated in his presence, though he repeatedly urged the advisability of her resting herself after her journey. Finding her obdurate in this matter, Mr. Benthall let the old lady have her way, and after he had chatted with her about her illness, and about her family, he thought he had exhausted the topics of interest between them, and inwardly wished she would go. But as she evinced no intention of stirring, he was obliged to cast about for something to say, and oddly enough hit upon a subject, the discussion of which with this old woman, was destined to have a certain amount of influence on his future life.

"Well, we've had wonderful changes here in Helmingham since you've been away, Mrs. Covey," he remarked.

"Ah! so I did heer, sir!" said the old woman. "Poor old Muster Pickering gone to his feaythers, and Mrs. Slatter's bad leg brokken out again, and not likely to heal this time, Anne told me Dr. Osborne says."

"Ay, ay, but I'm not talking about old Pickering or Mrs. Slatter. I mean the wedding—the great wedding!"

"Ah, well, I've heerd nowt o' that," said Mrs. Covey, adding, in a grumbling undertone, "I'm a stupid owd woman, and they tell me nowt."

"Not heard of it? Well, I wonder at that!" said Mr. Benthall, "more especially as it concerns your young mistress that was—Miss Ashurst, I mean!"

"What, is she married at last?" asked the old woman.

"She is indeed, and to Mr. Creswell—Squire Creswell of Woolgreaves——"

"What!" screamed Mrs. Covey, falling backward into the chair, which was fortunately close behind her. "You don't tell me that!"

"I do indeed! When was it?—last

Thursday. The—the happy couple"—(and Mr. Benthall gave a cynical grin as he said the words)—"the happy couple are away now on their wedding trip."

"Well, I niver did! I niver did! The old squire to come and marry Miss Marian! He that was allays so mumchance and so meek, and had a sweet tooth in 's head after all! I thowt it was to talk wi' the poor old master about book-larnin' and such stuff that he comed here! I'd niver an idee that he'd an eye for the young gell."

"Only shows how sly these old gentlemen can be when they choose, Mrs. Covey," said Mr. Benthall, much amused, "if they can deceive such sharp eyes as yours."

"Dear heart, I've no cause to call mine sharp eyes any longer, I think," said the old woman, shaking her head, "for I was took in by both on 'em. I niver thowt Miss Marian would throw t'other one over, that I niver did.

"What's that you're saying, Mrs. Covey?" asked Mr. Benthall, sharply.

"I was sayin' that I allays thowt Miss Marian would howld by the t'other one, and——"

"Other one? What other one? I never heard of there being any 'other one,' as you call it, in regard to Miss Ashurst."

"No! You didn't, I dare say! Nor didn't not no one else!" said the old lady, with a frightful redundancy of negatives; "but *I* did."

"And who was this 'other one,' if one may ask, Mrs. Covey?"

"One may ask, and there's only one can answer, and that one's me. Ah, well, there's no harm in tellin', now that she's married and all that, though I niver opened my mouth about it before to livin' soul, hopin' it would come all right like. Miss Marian were keepin' company wi' young Joyce!"

"Joyce! Joyce!" repeated Mr. Benthall. "What, young Mr. Joyce, who was one of Mr. Ashurst's masters here?"

"That very same! ay, and he were Miss Ashurst's master, he were, at the time I'm speakin' of!" said the old woman.

"Too much kitchen fire has brought on softening of this old person's brain!" said Mr. Benthall to himself. "There can't be a shadow of foundation for what she says, or I should surely have heard of it in the village!" Then, aloud, "What makes you think this, Mrs. Covey?"

"What meks me think it? Why, my own eyesight meks me think it, and that's the best think I can have i' the matter," replied the old woman, waxing rather cross at her master's evident incredulity. "Nobody niver spoke of it, becos' nobody knowed it, but I've sat at the kitchen window o' summer nights and seen 'em walkin' roun' the garden for hours thegither, hand-in-hand, or him wi' his arms round her waist, and I know what that means, tho' I may be an old fool!"

"No, no, Mrs. Covey, no one ever thought that for a minute," said Mr. Benthall, anxious to soothe the old woman's offended dignity, and really very much interested in the news she had given him. "No doubt you're quite correct, only, as I had never heard a hint of this before, I was rather startled at the suddenness of the announcement. Tell me now, had Mr. Ashurst any notion of what was going on?"

"Wasn't the schoolmaster, poor feckless critter, allays buzzed in th' heed wi' book-larnin' and troubles o' all sorts? No bittle as iver flew war blinder, nor deafer, than my poor owd master in matters what didn't concern him!"

"Nor Mrs. Ashurst?"

"Ah, the poor sickly thing, wi' pains here and aches there, and so dillicate, and niver 'nuff strength to look after what she ought, let alone anything else! No! they kept it to themselves, the young pipple, and nobody knowed nowt about it but me, and they didn't know as I knew, for the kitchen window, as you know, is hid wi' fuzz and creepers, and you can see out wi'out bein' seen! Lor, lor, and so she's gone and married that owd man! And t'other one's gone for sojer, they say, and all that story, as I used to sit i' the kitchen and make up in my head, will never be! Lor, lor, what a world it is!"

Mr. Benthall was very much surprised at the information which had come to him in that odd way. He had never thought much about Marian Ashurst, but he knew perfectly well that popular opinion in Helmingham and the neighbourhood held to the fact that she had never had any love-affair. He was disposed to regard her with rather more favour than before, for if what Mrs. Covey stated of her were true, it showed that at one time she must have possessed a heart, though she had allowed herself to ignore its promptings under the overweening influence of avarice. Mr. Benthall thought a good deal over this story. He wondered when, how, and under what circumstances Miss Ashurst had broken her

engagement, if such engagement existed, with Joyce. Whether she had deliberately planned her marriage with old Creswell, and had consequently abandoned the other design, or whether the old gentleman had proposed suddenly to her, and the temptation of riches and position being too great for her to withstand, she had flung her first lover aside on the spur of the moment, and thereby, perhaps, rendered herself wretched for life. Or what was it that the old woman said, about Joyce enlisting as a soldier? Perhaps that step on her lover's part had been the cause of Miss Ashurst's determination. No! on reflection, the enlisting, if he ever did enlist, looked like a desperate act on Joyce's part, done in despair at hearing the news of Marian's intended marriage! Mr. Benthall did not pin much faith to the enlisting part of the story. He had heard a good deal about Joyce from various sources, and he felt confident that he was by no means the kind of man who would be led to the perpetration of any folly of the kind. Mr. Benthall was puzzled. With any other two people he could have understood the hand-in-hand, and the arm-encircled waist, as meaning nothing more than a pleasant means of employing the time, meaning nothing, and to be forgotten by both persons when they might chance to be separated. But Mr. Joyce and Miss Ashurst were so essentially earnest and practical, and so utterly unlikely to disport themselves in the manner described without there had been a sincere attachment between them, that, taking all this into consideration in conjunction with the recent marriage, Mr. Benthall came to the conclusion that either Mrs. Covey must have, unintentionally of course, deceived herself and him, or that there was something remarkably peculiar in the conduct of Miss Ashurst, something more peculiar than pleasant or estimable. He wondered whether Gertrude or Maud had any suspicions on the matter. They had neither of them ever spoken to him on the subject, but then Maud generally left him alone with Gertrude, and when he and Gertrude were together, they had other things than other people's love-affairs to talk about. He had not been up to Woolgreaves since the wedding, had not—which was quite a different matter—seen either of the girls. He would ride over there the next afternoon, and see how matters progressed.

Accordingly the next day, while Maud and Gertrude were walking in the garden and discussing Mrs. Creswell's newly-arrived letter, or rather while Maud was commenting on it, and Gertrude, as usual, was chorusing her assent to all her sister said, they saw Mr. Benthall, at the far end of a long turf walk, making towards them. Immediately on recognising the visitor Maud stopped talking, and looked suddenly round at Gertrude, who, of course, blushed a very lively crimson, and said, "Oh, Maud, I wish you wouldn't!"

"Wish I wouldn't what, Gertrude?"

"Make me so hot and uncomfortable!"

"My dear, *I* don't make you hot and uncomfortable! We have been talking together for the last half-hour perfectly quietly, when suddenly—why, of course it's impossible for me to say—you blush to the roots of your hair, and accuse me of being the cause!"

"No; but, Maud, you don't mind his coming?"

"No indeed, Gertrude, I like *him*, if you mean Mr. Benthall, as of course you do, very much; and if you and he are both really in earnest, I think that you would——Here he is!"

"Good-day, ladies!" said Mr. Benthall, advancing with a bow. "I haven't seen you since you were left deserted and forlorn, so I thought I would come over and ask what news of the happy couple."

"They will be back at the end of the week; we heard from Mrs. Creswell this morning."

"Ah, ha, from the blushing bride! And how is the blushing bride, and what does she say?"

"She makes herself rather more odious and disagreeable than ever!" said Gertrude. "Oh, I don't mind, Maud! Geo—Mr. Benthall knows precisely what I feel about Miss Ashurst and her 'superior' ways and manners and nonsense!"

"What has she done now?"

"Oh, she has—no, Maud, I will speak! She has written to say that Maud must give up her music-room, you know where she always sits and practises, and where she's happier than anywhere else in the house, because my lady wants it for a boudoir, or something, where she can show off her 'superiority,' I suppose."

"Of course," said Maud, "Mrs. Creswell has a perfect right to——"

"O, bother!" said Gertrude; "of course it's perfectly disgusting! Don't you think so, Mr. Benthall?"

"That's a home question," said Mr. Benthall, with a laugh; "but it is scarcely in good taste of Mrs. Creswell so soon to——"

"I should think not, indeed!" interrupted Gertrude. "Oh, I see plainly what it will be. We shall lead nice lives with that awful woman!"

"I don't think you'll find, as I've told you before, that that 'awful woman' as you call her, will trouble herself with our companionship for long," said Maud; "and I cannot say that when she once comes into the house as mistress I should feel the least desire to remain here."

"And she'll do anything with poor uncle," said Gertrude; "he dotes on her."

"Naturally," said Mr. Benthall; "and she is very much attached to him?"

This question was rather addressed to Maud, and she answered it by saying quietly, "I suppose so."

"Oh, nonsense, Maud!" said Gertrude; "uncle's an old dear—kindest, nicest old thing in the world, but not for a girl to like in—well, in that sort of way, don't you know! Not the sort of man to be a girl's first love, I mean!"

"Are you sure that your uncle is Miss Ashurst's first love?"

"We never heard of any other. What is it, George—Mr. Benthall, I mean? You've found out something! Oh, do tell us!"

"Did you know anything of a Mr. Joyce, who was one of Mr. Ashurst's masters?"

"Certainly—a small, slim, good-looking young man," said Maud.

"Good-looking, eh?" said Mr. Benthall.

"Should not you say so, Gertrude?"

"Well, I don't know," said Gertrude; "he was too short, I think, and too dark. I like a—I mean——" And Gertrude broke down, and flew the flag of distress in her face again.

"What of Mr. Joyce, in connexion with the subject on which we were talking, Mr. Benthall?" asked Maud.

And then Mr. Benthall told them all he had heard from Mrs. Covey.

Gertrude went alone with Mr. Benthall to the gate, and they were a very long time saying their adieux. When she came back to the house she found her sister in the hall.

"You found the gate very difficult to open, Gerty!" said Maud, with her grave smile.

"Yes, dear, very difficult! Do you know, dear,—he hasn't said anything, but I think Mr. Benthall is going to ask me to be his wife!"

"Well, Gerty, and what then?"

"Then I shall have a home to offer you, my darling! a home where we can be together, and needn't be under the rule of that beautiful, superior creature!"

THE IRISH IN AMERICA.

THERE are few more suggestive sights to a thoughtful mind than that which may be witnessed, several days in each week, at Queenstown, the harbour of Cork. It is there that the hundreds of poor Irish emigrants who every week flock on board the westward-bound Atlantic steamers, walk for the last time on their native soil, and gaze for the last time upon their dear home-friends. No one can see the embarcation of these multitudes of forlorn creatures, the long painful parting from country and from friends, the crowding of the steerage deck as the steamer slowly swings out of the harbour into the open sea, the tearful eyes, covering the rude visages with honest moisture, straining to catch a last glimpse of the dear people who stand on the shore, the exclamations and throwing out of arms as the beloved slopes of the Irish coast gradually recede from the view, no one with a heart can see this sight unmoved, or without feeling a keen sympathy for the motley, even ludicrous-looking, crowd which is huddled together in the "forward" part of the ship.

Why have they left their native land, and what will they do when they reach America? Poverty and hardship, the impossibility of existing in their own crowded country, the accounts which have come from friends in America, and the wonderful narratives of lucky neighbours, who have returned to tell how the poor man thrives on the Western Continent, these are the causes which have determined the bold venture. What they will do when they reach the other shore, few of them have the remotest conception. They are haunted by visions of broad acres and vast meadows which await the first comer; by prospects of great fortunes easily acquired; by hopes of penetrating to the mines, and drawing thence endless nuggets of gold and silver. Some go in response to the urgent entreaty of relatives who have already tried the experiment. This old man is going to join his daughter Biddy, a prosperous maid-of-all-work in New York; or to see his lusty son, Pat, who has subdued a government-given tract of forest and prairie land in the Far West, so that it now yields him goodly crops of wheat, and enables him to live in ease and contentment. These brawny fellows have had a message from a townsman, who is happy as a prosperous builder of railroads, and has told them that they have only to get over, to prosper likewise.

With what self-denial have the poor souls hoarded up their pennies and sixpences, until they grew to the six sovereigns requisite to buy a steerage passage! And how crowded and huddled together are they over there in the for-

ward part of the steamer, living scantily on the limited allowance of bread, water, and occasional saloon leavings! They manage, nevertheless, to make a right merry voyage of it, after the home-sickness and sea-sickness are somewhat worn off, and a general acquaintance has been scraped; and on many a night, at sea, you and I, ensconced in the saloon, may hear their merry laughter, their rollicking songs, and the measure of their Irish jigs. And when the last morning comes, ushered in by cries of "Land!" "There's Long Island!" "There's Staten Island!" "There are the masts of the vessels anchored at New York!" perhaps there is no one aboard the steamer who strains eyes shoreward with such anxious gaze, as do these poor Irish emigrants, come to a strange land and among a strange people to seek the means of bare existence.

Of the Irish emigrants who thus land at the American ports, a very large majority remain where they first set foot on American soil. It is characteristic that, while French, German, Italian, and Scandinavian emigrants are prone to scatter themselves, to penetrate to the Western States, to become settlers on the vast fertile lands which the American Government parcels out and divides among those who will take and till them, to find out new and growing towns, and there establish themselves, the Irish almost invariably confine themselves to the vicinity, or the district of country round about the place where they reach the new continent. Thus it is that in nearly, if not all, of the Eastern cities there is, in the suburbs, a distinct Irish colony huddled together, living in little shanties, or in big houses which accommodate twenty or thirty families, and which is usually nicknamed by the native population "Dublin." According to the census, a large preponderance of the foreign population of the Atlantic cities is Irish; in the Western cities they are exceeded by the Dutch and Germans. Even the Frenchman, belonging to that nation which, of all civilised nations, travels least, is found in America to take more kindly to the life of a backwoodsman than the native of Erin. The Irishman is essentially a social animal; he sticks close to civilisation, hanging about its skirts; he huddles with groups of his own race near to populous cities and towns. The foreigner who visits New York for the first time is called upon to visit a certain notorious district in that metropolis, known, the land over, by the name of the "Five Points." It is in the heart of the lower town, and its name is derived from the junction of five narrow and filthy streets, which meet in a kind of open space in its centre. Here the Irish herd in squalid masses, living in houses where several families occupy a single room, issuing thence in the daytime to earn, or to pilfer, the pittance which is to keep them from starving for the next twenty-four hours. Here one sees the Irish in their state of lowest degradation. Here they are, thieves, vagabonds, murderers, garotters, burglars, here it is unsafe for the well-dressed citizen to pass, even in broad daylight, without an escort: so frightfully desperate is the misery of its low Irish denizens. Still, this "Five Points" district is, in a manner, a political power. Universal suffrage gives the people of the Five Points control over the elections. There exists a coterie of wretched native American "roughs," bar-room-keepers, gamblers, prize-fighters, who, by acts corrupt, yet shrewd, have managed to get this Irish population under their leadership. The result is seen in the election of corrupt mayors, of more corrupt judges, and of pugilists and gamblers to seats in the national congress. Electoral corruption, intimidation, and bribery, are here carried on openly, unblushingly, and unmolested. It is unsafe for any man to approach the polls in the "Five Points" for the purpose of giving a vote against the favourite candidate. The polls are guarded by troops of ruffians; the population of this quarter is a perpetual mob, ever ready for action; even if the police were not kept away by the corrupt authorities which the "Five Points" have put into power, they would hardly dare to engage with so formidable a mass of desperate vagabonds. The riots which now and then break out in the American metropolis have their rise in the "Five Points," without exception.

It may be here remarked that the criminal statistics of New York, indeed those of all the large Eastern cities, prove that a great majority of the murders, thefts, and arsons committed, are the work of the foreign population, and especially of the Irish. The "Five Points" and the "Dublins" of the Atlantic cities are very pandemoniums of strife and quarrelling; and it is hard to conceive a more abandoned ruffian than the downright bad Irishman. The same spirit which commits agrarian crime on the soil of Erin, survives the Atlantic voyage, crops out on the other side, and fills the American courts and prisons with criminals of a most desperate and incorrigible class. All the virtue and patriotism in New York has hitherto been unavailing to destroy the political power which has its seat in the "Five Points."

But this is the darker side of the picture; it is a necessary penalty for the hospitality which America extends to the vagrants of all nations. While, however, the lower, desperate, poverty-stricken stratum of the Irish do certainly constitute a great sore on the face of all the large American cities, the better and more honest class of Irish are a highly important element in American society. The vast majority of the Irish who emigrate to the Western continent, not only succeed in getting a good living, and comfortable situations, but they give in return an ample equivalent in their industry, and capacity for hard rough work. Probably every railroad in America was built by Irish hands; nearly all the heavy, disagreeable drudgery to be performed in the country is done by them. It is the Irish, and the Irish alone, who clean the streets, dig the gutters, build the roads, make the sewers; the farms

teem with Irish labourers; they are the best fellers of wood and diggers of potatoes. They are, in America, emphatically toilers by the sweat of their brow. They form a striking contrast with their companion in labour, the negro: all the world over, he has to be driven to his work—all the world over, he is lazy, and only exerts himself on compulsion of some sort or other. The Irishman works heartily and sturdily. He is impudent, he is obstinate, he is inclined to get into hot discussion with his comrades—but he works with a will. I have often seen Irishmen working on New England farms; I never saw one with an inclination to indolence. This indefatigable capacity for hard toil enables the Irishman to outbid every competitor. And his lot is not to be despised. Let him once find work on a New England farm, and he has capital wages, comfortable lodging, healthy meals, good land to work on, plenty to drink, and *people to bicker with*. He was never born to manage a farm; he is not thrifty; as good a piece of ground as there is in the peerless Shenandoah valley of Virginia would go to ruin under his control; but set him his farm work—leave him no option but to dig this acre of potatoes, or reap that field of wheat—and he stands unrivalled. The rule is, of course, not an universal one; there are exceptional Irishmen who, from obeying, do learn to command; from inhabiting a farm, and plodding on it, these get to be thrifty and able to manage. Such an Irishman sometimes takes his place among the independent farmers; one of the richest farmers in Massachusetts—a man who gets from his land some three or four thousand dollars a year—is an Irishman who emigrated to America twenty years ago without twenty shillings in the pockets of his patched trousers, who plodded and plodded, bought a little plot, added to it, and now sends his daughters to fashionable boarding schools, his sons to the university, and his wife to town in a two-horse carriage. Among the farmers in the rural districts of New England—and especially in New Hampshire—it is the custom to treat the labourers and servants much as if they were members of the family. The Irish "helps," male and female, take their places at the table with the farmer, his wife, sons, and daughters; they are helped from the same dishes; they join in the conversation, they enjoy their post prandial pipes with the "boss," on the little lawn in front of the farmhouse. They are provided with bedrooms in no respect inferior to those occupied by the master and mistress; they join in many of their amusements—go a-fishing or picnicing with them; they sit in the parlour and hear the papers or books read in the evening; and, in short, partake of all the comforts and enjoyments of home. And the constant companionship of the average New England farmer's family is no mean advantage to the poor, ignorant Irish emigrants.

The New England farmer who so democratically admits his poorest and most ignorant "hand" to his table and his family circle, is almost without exception a man of some education, and of vigorous and independent habit of thought. He is not only capable of reading and writing, but he has a keen love of papers and books; is admirably posted in the politics and events of the day; is himself a most enthusiastic politician, and fairly revels in argumentation with a rustic opponent. He has been educated at one of those free schools of which New England people are justly proud: working on the farm, when a boy, during the summer months, and availing himself of the bleak winters to attend the little rustic school which a wise legislation has provided for him. Thus the Irish labourer, separated from the association of other ignorant Patlanders like himself, having in the association of the farmer's family and in the comforts of the farmer's house an efficacious substitute for the public-house, becomes more intelligent and more industrious, and is gradually moulded into an useful member of democratic American society. Treated as an equal, ambition of a worthy kind is begotten in him; if he be as good as the "boss," and worthy to break bread with him, why not aspire to be a "boss" himself? And so it comes about that now and then examples appear, of Irishmen becoming landed proprietors. But the larger part of the emigrants who penetrate beyond the cities, are of a nomadic, restless, roving disposition. They wander about the country in the summer time, picking up a farming job here and there, indisposed to remain long in one place, working with a will, but thriftlessly spending their earnings as fast as they make them. Labour is so much in demand, that they never have to go far without employment, and in return for whatever work they do, they receive what must seem to them, coming from over-crowded Ireland, a very handsome wage. Notwithstanding all its advantages, the Irishman in America does not appear to take so kindly to farm work as to the irksome drudgery which is his lot in the cities. After all, he prefers to live in "Dublin," if it be only the imitation Dublin which hangs on the outskirts of every American city. Here he has his mates and his wife, and here he cheerfully digs gutters, and clears streets, for the privilege of living in an over-crowded and dirty nest of children of Erin like himself. And here, in the cities, he is a godsend to the corporations, who get their more humble jobs done better and cheaper by the Paddies than by any other workmen.

The mass of Irish remain in the Northern and Eastern States. To the South the Irishman is loath to go, for he finds in the negro a competitor who contests the market with him at great advantage. No white race can compete with the negro on a cotton, rice, or sugar plantation. The Irishman cannot exist on so little as the black man. The Irishman is the more vigorous labourer in the North; but the Southern sun melts him, gives him sunstroke, paralyses him, while the hotter the day, the livelier the negro. It is amusing to note what an instinctive antipathy exists between these two rival races for securing the work of the American employer. Each seems

to be conscious of this rivalry—each seems to feel that the other is in his way. Each affects a profound contempt for the other; and as both are gifted with a facile use of the tongue, and a perfect arsenal of epithets, a hostile dialogue between the white and the black is one of the most unique and amusing imaginable. Sometimes, in the more northerly of the States where slavery formerly existed, Irish and negroes are found huddled together in the same quarter or suburb; then there is constant quarrelling and strife.

It is odd that, much as the Irish like to huddle together and live in crowds, such a thing is scarcely ever heard of as an Irish colony in the vast plains of the West. Natural farmers as they are, you never hear of their associating together, taking a westward course, and settling on the rich domains which the American government offers free to all who will "squat" and till. In Michigan there is a famous Dutch colony, where nothing but Dutch is spoken, nothing but Dutch dishes are eaten, nothing but Dutch pipes are smoked, and none but Dutchmen hold office; a colony imported from Amsterdam. Further South—in those states which formerly composed part of the French colony of Louisiane—French colonies may be found, where you would starve before you found a man who could understand your order for dinner in English. In Missouri, Nebraska, and Kansas, German settlements may be found quite as characteristic and exclusively foreign. There is so large a leaven of the Teutonic element in Missouri, that a German refugee has just now been elected United States senator to represent that great and growing state. But the Irish have not, as a mass, a capacity of self-reliance. They must cling as dependents upon another civilisation; so they remain in the East, and leave the emigrants of other nations to patiently build up communities stamped with their own national traits in the boundless West.

What becomes of the Irish *girls* who constitute a large majority of the emigrants? The great mass of them become cooks, maids-of-all-work, chambermaids, household servants of some sort. Probably the chambermaids and scullerymaids of every hotel in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago—all the cities—are buxom Irish girls. At least nine-tenths of the servants in the private houses in the North and East are of the same nation. The healthy Irish girl who leaves her own country to seek her fortune beyond the ocean, has in her excellent stuff for the fulfilling of household duties. She is strong, she is quick to learn, she is willing to work, and wherever she is wanting in taste, tutelage by the mistress goes far to mend it. Many family matrons prefer to take a raw emigrant rather than a girl who has been long in America. She is more honest, she is not troubled with too many beaux and acquaintances, she blunders yet is willing to learn, she does her best, and she has not yet acquired those *grand notions* of dress and independence which the Irish girl long resident is apt to have picked up. She is capable of making a really good plain cook, and if she be taken straight from shipboard, may be educated to her mistress's peculiar style of cookery—every mistress, be it said, having a style and dishes of her own. The main trouble with the Irish servant is, that she is prone to be too social in character, readily makes acquaintances, and holds high carnival in the kitchen with the family provisions. Still, with all her shortcomings, she is nothing less than invaluable to American households. It is only in the far West, and back in the rural districts of New England, that native American girls are found in service. The negro "Mammies," now free, are probably destined to become rivals of the Irish "Biddies;" still, the former usually prefer their native South to the bleak and unfruitful North.

During the war of the Rebellion, the Irish naturalised citizens of the United States did sterling service for the Federal cause. Throughout the land, volunteer regiments were formed composed exclusively of Irishmen; and more than one illustrious name among the Union generals betrays the Celtic origin of its bearer. Sheridan, now second in command of the American army, was the son of Irish parents; the gallant Colonel Corcoran, of the New York Irish Regiment, was one of the most brilliant soldiers and best beloved commanders of the epoch. The revival of Fenianism since the war, is often attributed to the martial spirit engendered among the Irish soldiers during that great struggle; and this is no doubt partially true. But the spirit of hostility to England among the emigrant Irish of America was universally prevalent long before the war; and while that event gave greater force to the movement in favour of Irish independence, it by no means developed any greater rancour than that previously felt towards the mother country. Fenianism owes much encouragement to native American demagogues who have hounded it on for their own political purposes; but it chiefly owes its popularity among the American Irish to the energy, boldness, and eloquence of a few Irish leaders, most of whom were Federal officers in the war. If anything were wanting to prove the incapacity of the Irish character for self-government, the course of Fenianism in America proves it. They are too bellicose among themselves; they never have been cordially united; they are credulous, and allow swindlers to rob them; they are quarrelsome, and dissipate their energy and resources in internal dissension. The poor Irish servant, ardently attached to "darling Erin," and excited by the harangues against England, saved her little weekly pittance, and cheerfully gave it up to Fenian "circles" to be devoured by the leaders of the cause, and to be embezzled by the swindlers to whom they confided it.

The Irish in America, although, as has been said, they are clannish, do yet gradually merge themselves into the general community, and become part and parcel of the American population. The second generation of the

emigrant Irish are educated at the free public schools, rise to a higher sphere of labour than their parents, in many instances become Protestants, and then freely mingle with the rest of the community as thoroughly Americanised citizens. Many of the most eminent American statesmen, scholars, and merchants have been the children of emigrants, or have come from the generation next succeeding the native Irish generation. Presidents Jackson and Buchanan were sons of Irish parents; so was Vice-President Calhoun, one of the greatest of American orators. A. T. Stewart, the merchant prince of New York, was a native of Belfast. James T. Brady, foremost of criminal advocates in New York; Meagher, the general and writer; were Irish. This proves that the boast of Americans, that their country offers its prizes to all who will compete for them, is not unfounded; it also proves that there are characteristics, even among the poor classes of Irish who are driven to emigration for existence, which are capable of development into the power of leading men, and into a high influence upon the age.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. PENRYN TO THE LAND'S END.

A FLIGHT on to Penryn, that beautiful town on a ridge sloping down to a branch of Falmouth harbour, and facing the wooded slope on which stands the church of St. Gluvias, embedded among trees. North of the town is the farm of Bohethland, the scene of that truly pathetic tragedy which Lillo, the London goldsmith, who wrote immortal "George Barnwell" dramatised.

The story of the Fatal Curiosity is this. In the reign of James the First, the scapegrace son of a well-to-do man of Penryn turned bad, went to sea, and became first a terror to the Spaniards, like Drake and Raleigh, then, by an easy slide downward, a pirate. Fifteen years passed, and the father and mother getting poorer and poorer, retired to Bohethland farm. In the meanwhile the son had gone through fire and water. Off Rhodes his vessel had caught fire while attacking a Turkish ship, and he had saved himself by swimming. Some jewels he preserved were, however, recognised as belonging to a Turkish pasha, who had been robbed at sea, and the sailor was instantly hurried to the galleys. He escaped, and in an English vessel reached London, whence he embarked again as a doctor's servant, went to the East Indies, saved money, returned to England, and on his way from London to Cornwall was wrecked upon his native shore. He went straight to Penryn, carrying a large sum of money in a bow case. He revealed himself to his sister who had married a mercer, and arranged to walk as a beggar to Bohethland, see his father and mother, and enjoy the luxury of that pleasure till next day, when the sister and her husband should join him and share the joy of the discovery and recognition. The man accordingly went, and passing as a poor shipwrecked sailor, was permitted to lie down in the barn. He was shown his bed in the stable, and then gave his mother a piece of gold to pay for his lodging, showed her the bow-case belt that he carried under his rags, and blessed her secretly as she closed the door and left him to dream of the happy morrow. But the desire of gold had fired the woman's mind. She went straight to her husband, assured him of the beggar's wealth, overcame his scruples, urged the glories of a fortune, and dragged him, knife in hand, to murder the sleeping stranger who was dreaming of them. On the following day the sister and her husband came with smiling faces and inquired for the sailor. The old people denied having seen him. The daughter then burst out with the truth, and as a proof told the mother of a well-known mark on his arm that she had recognised. The father rushed to the barn, recognised the mark, and slew himself there with the knife that had wrought the murder. The maddened mother also destroyed herself, and the daughter soon after died of a broken heart. Surely only the story of Œdipus can equal the pathos of this Cornish tragedy.

Falmouth, close to Penryn, consisted only of two houses in Leland's time, Arwenak, the Killigrews' mansion, and Pendennis castle, on the point facing Trefusis. Sir Walter Raleigh, landing in the beautiful haven, on his return from the fatal expedition to the coast of Guinea, was struck with the advantage of the noble harbour, with the entrance a mile wide, and represented it to the council. The village of Penny-come-quick soon arose. In 1652 the custom-house was removed to it from Penryn. In 1660 the place was named Falmouth by royal proclamation; and in 1661 it received its charter. Pendennis castle, that crowns with its grey walls the western bluff, was erected in the reign of Henry the Eighth. The governor (eighty-seven years old) held it for six months, till starved out, against the enraged Parliament. This was the last place, indeed, except Raglan castle, that stood out for the miserable Stuarts. The Killigrews nobly burned down Arwenak during this siege, to prevent the Parliament generals having quarter there for their troops. The last male Killigrew was killed in a duel at Penryn, and the property went to Lord Wodehouse. There is a good story told of one of the Killigrews of Arwenak, Lady Jane, in Elizabeth's time, and it shows the current feeling against the Spaniards which the lives of Drake and Raleigh illustrated; yet which it is now so difficult to excuse. This energetic lady and her retainers boarded two Hans Town vessels, with Spanish wealth in their holds, that had ventured between St. Anthony and the Manacles, murdered the innocent Spanish factors, and carried off with glee two hogsheads full of shining pieces of eight. The legality of this seizure was not sufficiently appreciated; the whole party were hung, except the originator, Lady Jane Killigrew, who was first reprieved and then

pardoned. In 1612 she presented the corporation of Penryn with a big silver cup, in gratitude for the sympathy they had shown her.

Not far from Falmouth, in the parish of Constantine, was the scene, many years ago, of an unprecedented escape. A Mr. Chapman, of Carwithenick, was returning, on a dark night, from Redruth, with his servant, the worse for wine, but just conscious that there was danger of abandoned and unfenced shafts. They were both leading their horses, when all at once Chapman's horse started back, and his master fell into a pit twenty fathoms (ninety feet) deep. Wonderful to relate, he dropped fifteen fathoms, and then was stopped unhurt by a cross drift only three feet above six fathoms of dark water. Hearing the earth and stones splash below, he thrust his sword into the earth to hold by, and planting his feet against the opposite wall, clung there seventeen long hours, till those who searched for him in the neighbouring shafts heard his groans, set tackle over the black chasm, and drew him up unhurt. He lived many years after.

A beat of the wings further west to Helston, pleasant on its hill ruling over the valley opening to the sea. It was here that Satan, carrying a huge rock (broken up in 1783) that had once closed the mouth of hell, to balance him in his flight through Cornwall, dropped his burden when attacked and put to flight by Michael the Archangel, who ever defends the town. This victory is still commemorated by Furry Day, a festival on the 8th of May. No Helston man works on that day. Furry Day morning is born to the merry sound of church bells. At nine o'clock the people assemble at the grammar school, and demand their annual holiday. They then collect money and go into the fields; "fade" into the country as they call it. About noon they return laden with flowers and green boughs, then till dusk they dance hand-in-hand through Helston streets, and in and out of the different houses, preceded by a fiddler playing the old British Furry tune, and chanting in chorus some traditional doggerel, which commences:

> Robin Hood and Little John they both are gone to fair O,
> And we will to the merry green wood to see what they do there O.

Cutting the bar of Looe pool, is another Helston festival. When in winter the stream of the Cober cannot filter through the bar of pebbles that Tregeagle dropped, and mills are stopped and floods begin, the mayor of Helston comes with workmen, presents the lord of the manor with his feudal fee of three halfpence in a leather purse, and obtains permission to cut the bar.

Far west now, the crow passes within sight of the mount that looks towards "Nomancos and Bayona's hold," and within hearing of the booming Atlantic waves; past the mansion of the Godolphins, now a farm house; past Pengersick Castle, built by a merchant whose weight of gold broke his donkey's back; past Prussia Cave, where about 1780 an audacious smuggling landlord actually opened fire on a revenue sloop; and lastly Tremen Keverne, where there are some boulders of ironstone, to which is attached a most damaging legend of St. Just. The legend deposes that once on a while, St. Just, of the Land's End, paid a visit to St. Keverne of the Lizard, who entertained him hospitably. The fact is, however (we cannot conceal it), that St. Just behaved with shameful ingratitude, for he went off with several valuable articles of plate in his pockets. St. Keverne, counting his spoons, discovering his loss, and more than suspecting his artful guest, started at once in pursuit, only stopping at Crousa Down to pocket three large blocks of granite of about a quarter of a ton each. He overtook his saintly brother at Breage, and at once charged him with the robbery. St. Just was at first astonished, then angry, lastly furious. The great and good men, lamentable to say, came to blows; but St. Keverne so plied the erring man with stones that he at last took to his heels, disburdening himself of the plate as he ran. The missiles of the injured St. Keverne are those very stones now lying by the roadside at Tremen Keverne.

At Perran-uthnoe, on the coast between Cuddan Point and Marazion (the Jews' town), just as Mount's Bay opens to the eye, there is a rocky recess shown, where an ancestor of the Trevelyans, the only survivor, rode ashore when Lyonesse, with its one hundred and forty churches, and all the land between the Land's End and the Scilly Isles, was submerged by a sudden inundation of the sea. There is a legend at Cuddan Point, close by, that a wicked lord of Pengersick was feasting in a boat, in which there was a silver table, when the craft suddenly went down. Fishermen have seen the table in deep water, with the skeletons still seated round it. One thing is certain, that the sea even now is making great inroads on this coast. The Eastern Green, between Penzance and Marazion, has been sensibly diminished during the last fifty years; and the Western Green, now a sandy beach, was all pasturage in the reign of Charles the Second. Beneath the sands of St. Michael's Bay black vegetable mould is found, with nut-leaves and branches, roots and trunks of oak-trees, and bones of red deer and elk. As ripe nuts have been dug up, it is supposed that the sea must have broken in in the autumn.

Penzance, sacked by Spaniards in 1595, and by Fairfax in 1646, boasts one curious custom, which perpetuates the old sun and fire worship. On the 23rd and 28th of June, the summer solstice, the eves of St. John and St. Peter, the people of Penzance, Mousehole, Newleyn, Marazion, and the Mount, light tar barrels and brandish torches, till the whole bay glows with a crescent of flame. The people then join hands and play at thread-the-needle, in the streets, running madly about, shouting, "An eye! an eye! an eye!" When they suddenly stop, the last couple, raising their clasped hands, form the eye, through which all the other couples run. The next day is spent idly on the

water—"having a pen'orth of sea," they call it—or in boating parties with music.

On the west side of Mount's Bay, the crow visits the village of Mousehole, because there, in 1778, aged one hundred and two, died old Dolly Pentreath, the last person who habitually spoke Cornish, which almost exactly resembled the Celtic of Wales, the Highlands, and Britany. There are no printed books in Cornish. Dr. Moreman, of Menheniot, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, was the first who taught his parishioners the Lord's Prayer in English. In 1640, at Feock, near Truro, the Sacrament was administered in Cornish; and in 1678 sermons in Cornish were preached near the Lizard Point. In 1700 the language was still spoken by the tinners and fishermen of St. Just, and round Mount's Bay. In 1758 the language had ceased to be spoken, and in 1776 there were but four or five persons living who could speak the language.

Almost every cove and headland round the Land's End has its legend. One of the wildest is told of Porthcurnow Cove, near the Logan stone. It is a lonely cove, where St. Levan once dwelt, and still contains the ruins of a small oratory. A spectre ship—a black square-rigged unearthly craft—is often seen here, usually followed by a boat. It comes in from sea about nightfall, when the mists rise, glides up over the sands towards Bodelan, and vanishes at Chygwiden. No crew are visible in the spectre ship, and bad fortune follows those who see the phantom vessel. At St. Ives, on stormy nights, a lady with a lantern is seen moving over the rocks on the east side of the island. They say it is the ghost of a lady who, long ago, lost her child in a wreck, but was herself saved.

The most weird legend, however, is that of Porth Towan. They tell you there that a fisherman, walking one still night on the sands, heard a voice from the sea exclaim, three times:

The hour is come, but not the man.

At the third cry a black figure appeared on the top of the hill, paused for a moment, then rushed down the cliffs over the sands, and was lost in the sea.

And now one flight more brings the crow to Pedn-an-Laaz, the LAND'S END, that great pile of granite that thrusts itself forward, the very bowsprit of England, into the Atlantic waves. Its great cliffs are darkened with the salt spray of the sea mists, its caverns moan ceaselessly as with the voices of imprisoned spirits. Gulls and cormorants watch on its ledges and clefts for the bodies of the drowned that are cast on shore. Those strange rocks, the Shark's Fin and the Armed Knight, rise breast high in the yeasty sea like giants wading out to the cluster of rocks where the Longships Lighthouse raises its beacon star. On a clear morning from the Land's End a keen eye can just distinguish the islands of Scilly, nine leagues distant, like faint blue clouds in the horizon. Between these Cassiterides of the Phœnicians, who came to Cornwall to trade for tin, and the Land's End, lies the buried Lyonesse, the country that King Arthur hunted over. There used to be a horseshoe cut on the edge of the precipice to the left of the Land's End, to commemorate a narrow escape which occurred there. An officer, quartered at Falmouth, and on a visit to Penzance, laid a bragging wager that he would ride to the very extreme point of the Land's End. He was already far along the dangerous, lofty, and narrow path, when his horse, frightened by the feather in his master's cap, began backing obstinately towards the yawning precipice. The rider leaped off, but the bridle caught in the buttons of his coat, and he was dragged to the very brink of the rocks before his companions could disengage him. The horse rolled over and was dashed to pieces on the beach.

And now the crow, turning again for a quick flight back to the gold cross upon St. Paul's, from whence he must soon venture forth eastward, strikes out his black wings, upborne by the west wind fresh from the Atlantic, for his sooty home in the great city.

A POOR MAN ON A TENDER SUBJECT.

I SING a song of a publican,
A wicked man was he,
And he kept the Goat and Compasses
For thirty years and three.

To all the people round about,
He sold no end of beer:
Very strong beer it was, I wot,
"In the season of the year."

We drank it, drank it, night and day,
I and my mates, each one,
Though we little knew what kind of a brew
Came out of the landlord's tun.

It put strange fancies in our heads,
Leastways it did in mine:
Except when I happened to fall asleep,
Unconscious as a swine.

I found the secret out at last,
I need not tell you how.
He served the beer as they serve the milk,
By the help of the iron cow.

And had it been no wuss than this,
It were a cruel sin,
But he made it wuss a wery great deal
By the pisons he put in.

He made it strong with deadly drugs,
The bigger fools were we,
To drink and pay for such rascal stuff
For thirty years and three.

But, as I've said, I found him out,
And vowed to drink no more,
Lest I should stand in the felon's dock,
Or knock at the workhouse door.

Dick who drank it for ten long year,
Murder'd his blessëd wife:
Which he wouldn't ha' done unless for the beer,
For he loved her more than life.

And Tom went wrong, and Dick went dead,
And Joe went out of his mind,
While Bill and Sam ran right away,
And left their wives behind.

And many other fine fellows I knew,
Grew old afore their time,
Or could not get a job of work,
To keep their hands from crime.

This landlord once upon a day,
Fell sick and like to die,
And sent for me as well as the priest,
Though I could not tell for why.

"Harry," says he, "I've pisoned the beer,
'Tis the very truth I've spoke;
Yet prayed at church on Sabbath-days
Along with the Christian folk.

"Why didn't they nail my ears to the post?
They'd done it in days gone by!
And perhaps I wouldn't ha' pisoned the poor
Wi' drugs to make them dry.

"Wi' drugs to make them wery dry,
So that the more they drank,
The more they thirsted and wished to swill
Like horses at a tank.

"I'm a sneak, a thief, and a hypocrite,
And perhaps a murderer, too,
Though I'm glad to see, 'mid all my sins,
As I've not murdered you.

"But when I think on Dick that swung,
Aloft on the gallows tree,
I've mortal fear, 'twas the pisoned beer
That was the ruin of he.

"And his ghost comes prowling every night,
And chatters at my bed,
And when I looks on its dreadful face,
I wishes that I was dead.

"And I feel I'm going, Harry," says he,
"And a wery bad man I've been,
Though I've made a heap of dirty gold,
That I wishes I'd never seen.

"Good bye! good bye! I'm going to die!
I cannot abear them ghosts
That come every night with horrid grins,
Not one, or two, but hosts."

And this landlord was as good as his word,
For he died the wery next night,
And I'm truly glad I was not him,
For all his guineas bright.

And it's my opinion, if I'm fit
To form a judgment clear,
That the wery worst thing a man can do
Is to pison the people's beer!

NATIVE TRIBES OF NEW MEXICO.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

Civilised man, although he lives by the destruction of life, animal as well as vegetable, takes care to reproduce by artificial means as much as, if not more than, he destroys; the savage, however, does not always do this, and when he does not, surely this is a proof that he is *not* destined by Providence permanently to exist.

Most conspicuous amongst the latter class are the Navajos and Apaches of New Mexico and Arizona—the hereditary enemies of the cultivator of the soil, whether he be Aztec, Mexican, or Anglo-Saxon—the savages, by means of whom the whole country has been nearly swept of its inhabitants, and changed from a fertile garden into a barren waste.

The Navajos, until lately, occupied a fine tract of country watered by the Colorado, Chiquito, and San Juan rivers and their tributaries, as well as by some of the western branches of the Rio Grande. They were bounded on the north by the Utah nation, on the south by the Apaches, on the west by the Moqui and Zuñi pueblos, and on the east by the inhabitants of the Rio Grande valley. Although often placed under the head of Apaches, they are in every respect a different and a finer race. They are bold and defiant, with full lustrous eyes, and a sharp, intelligent expression of countenance; they had fixed abodes in their country, around which they raised crops almost rivalling those of the Pimas on the Gila: they carried one art—the weaving of blankets—to a state of perfection which, in closeness of texture and arrangement of colour, is scarcely excelled even by the laboured and costly seraphes of Mexico and South America. I tried at Santa Fé to purchase some, but the prices were so enormous, averaging from seventy to one hundred dollars for choice specimens, that I refrained. For love of plunder and rapine, these Indians have no equals. Their number, twenty years ago, was probably about twelve thousand, and while they left their wives and old men to plant, reap, attend to the stock, and make blankets, the braves spent their lives in traversing the whole country, carrying off the stock of the helpless Mexican farmers, and keeping the entire agricultural and mining population in a constant state of alarm. To give a slight idea of the depredations of these hordes, I may state that between August 1, 1846, and October 1, 1850, there were stolen by them, according to the report of the United States Marshals, no less than twelve thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven mules, seven thousand and fifty horses, thirty-one thousand five hundred and eighty-one horned cattle, and four hundred and fifty-three thousand two hundred and ninety-three head of sheep. The official reports from New Mexico appeared to contain nothing but catalogues of depredations committed by the Navajos, or of similar deeds done by the Apaches; and not only was the valley of the Rio Grande swept over and over again of its stock, but the Pueblo Indians of Zuñi, and many other native towns, barely escaped destruction.

Governor Charles Bent thus spoke of them in 1846: "The Navajos are an industrious, intelligent, and warlike race of Indians, who cultivate the soil, and raise sufficient grain and fruits of various kinds for their own consumption. They are the owners of large herds and flocks of cattle,

sheep, horses, mules, and asses. It is estimated that the tribe possesses thirty thousand head of horses, mules, and asses. It is not rare for one individual to possess five to ten thousand sheep, or four to five hundred head of other stock. Their horses and sheep are said to be greatly superior to those reared by the Mexicans. A large portion of their stock has been acquired by marauding expeditions against the settlements of this territory. They roam over the country, between the waters of the river San Juan on the north, and those of the Gila on the south. This country is about one hundred and fifty miles wide, consisting of high table mountains, difficult of access, affording them, as yet, effectual protection against their enemies. Water is scarce, and difficult to be found by those not acquainted with the country, affording them another natural safeguard against invasion. Their numbers are variously estimated at from one to two thousand families, or about fourteen thousand souls. The Navajos, so far as I am informed, are the only nation on the continent having intercourse with white men, that are increasing in numbers. They have in their possession many prisoners, men, women, and children, taken from the settlements of this territory, whom they hold and treat as slaves."

Such was their condition in 1846; since then their history has been one long series of misfortunes. As far back as any information can be obtained about them, they have been at war with the Mexicans and white men, the system of reprisals being systematically carried out on both sides. The Mexicans of one settlement would collect together, and make a raid on a marauding band of Navajos, capturing all they could, not only in stock, but in women and children. The Indians would retaliate, not caring particularly whether it was the aggressors or some peaceful neighbours they attacked in return. This being the state of affairs, we find even as early as the autumn of the first year of possession, that General Kearney (United States army), gave orders to Colonel A. W. Doniphan, then in California, to march against the Navajos; and to Governor Bent, advising him that "full permission should be given to the citizens of New Mexico, to march in independent companies against these Indians, for the purpose of making reprisals, and for the recovery of property and prisoners." From this time until 1863 war has been unceasing with this hardy tribe. Their hand has been against every one, and every one's hand has been against them, even the pueblos left their villages and joined the whites against them; and as the enemy had actual property in corn-fields, flocks, and herds, they could not, like their wild neighbours the Apaches, who lived by the chase and marauding only, altogether escape from the hands of the military. It was cruel work, however necessary. I have spoken to many who helped to *humble* the Navajos. As soon as harvest time approached, they would enter their country year after year; they say that the corn-fields were splendid, but they cut them all down, and fired the district wherever they went, driving off sheep sometimes to the number of seventy thousand in a single raid, and oxen also by thousands. When there were no crops to destroy, and no apparent enemy to be found, or flocks to drive off, the military would encamp at the different springs, and try by this means to destroy the remnant of the stock; but in this, for a long time, they were unsuccessful, for the Navajo sheep, probably from force of habit, could thrive well if only watered once every third or fourth day; and thus it happened that when the troops had guarded a spring long enough, as they supposed, to prove that no Indians or flocks were in that district, and had left to go to another, the Navajos, who were quietly grazing their cattle in the secluded nooks amongst the hills hard by, came down to the spring and refreshed themselves with perfect impunity. Year after year they boldly held out, and plunder became to them a necessity of existence, for they had no other means of support. At last, however, this never-ceasing hostility reduced the whole tribe to utter destitution, nor did they give up until they were literally starving. In 1863 the first large section of them—I believe about five thousand in number—delivered themselves up to the government. They were removed from their own country, and placed upon a large reservation on the Rio Pecos, and old Fort Sumner, which had been abandoned, was re-established in the centre of the reservation, for the purpose of carrying out the designs of the government towards them. Since then, nearly all the remainder of the tribe have delivered themselves up, and to the number of about seven thousand five hundred have been placed on the reservation. Mr. Ward is of opinion that a very small fraction indeed of this once powerful tribe are now at large in the territory north of the Rio Colorado, and in Utah territory; but since, for years

before they gave in, the advantage has been on the side of the settlers against the Navajos, he assures me that there are at the present time not less than two thousand captives in the hands of the Mexicans, who, of course, profess to bring them up, and to take care of them as members of their families and households. As regards the present condition of the Indians on the Bosque reservation, I cannot do better than give a quotation from the report of Colonel A. B. Norton (superintendent of Indian affairs in New Mexico), for the year 1866:

"At Fort Sumner they have about two thousand five hundred acres of land under cultivation, mostly in Indian corn, with an admirable system of irrigation. The water, however, is very poor in quality, and wood so scarce, that it has to be hauled from twenty-five to thirty miles to the post, while the mezquite root, the only wood used by them for fuel, must soon give out. Add to this that the Comanches make constant raids upon them, to within a few miles of the fort, and as they are very little able to protect themselves, this adds still more to their discontent. Of the state of health and morals of these Navajos, the hospital reports give a woful account. The tale is not half told, because they have such an aversion to the hospital that but few of those taken sick will ever go there, and so they are fast diminishing in numbers; while the births are many, the deaths are more. Discontent fills every breast of this brave and light-hearted tribe, and a piteous cry comes from all as they think of their own far-off lands, 'Carry me back, carry me back!'"

While the Navajos spread terror and desolation through the north and east of New Mexico, the Apaches followed the same system of plunder in the southern part of the state, and throughout the greater part of Arizona and northern Sonora; with this great difference, that among the former booty was the only object, and they spared life unless resistance were offered; but with the latter, war to the death was, and still is, the undeviating practice. In battle the Navajo never stoops to scalp his fallen enemy, and many acts of true generosity are related of him; but the cowardly Apache creeps upon his victim like a snake in the grass; if he can capture him he invariably tortures him to death, but otherwise he scalps and mutilates him in the most horrible manner, and has never been known to show one trace of humanity or good faith.

Several independent though kindred tribes are rightly classed under the term Apaches; the following table gives their names, the localities in which they are usually encountered, and the probable population of each.

Names.	Districts.	Population.
Zicarrilla Apaches	Maxwell's reservation and Tons district	500
Mescalero „	Mountain south of Fort Stanton	525
Mogollon tribes, comprising the		
Miembres Apaches...	Miembres Mountains	400
Coyotero „	Sierra Blanca of Arizona	700
Pinal „	Pina-leña Cordillera	2000
Tonto „	Between the Rio Salinas and Verde	800
Chiracahui „	Chiracahui mountains.....	500

The first of these tribes is now quite harmless, and as they are too few and cowardly to hold their own against the other tribes, they willingly submit to being fed and taken care of at the expense of the government. The second tribe was formerly a very warlike one, and it is chiefly owing to their ravages that the fertile valley of the Rio Grande, from San Antonio, north of Fort Craig, to La Messilla, a distance of over one hundred miles, is now an uninhabited waste. War, disease, and scarcity of food have of late years so thinned their ranks, that the government succeeded a short time ago, in collecting them together and placing them on the Bosque reservation with the Navajos. As these tribes were sworn enemies, they did not long live together, for on the night of November 3, 1866, the Apaches deserted, and have since that time been committing depredations on the government stock, and murdering and plundering the settlers so far north as Las Vegas and Galistro.

All the Mogollon bands are still at large. They mostly inhabit the vast region formed of lofty table-lands and mountain ranges in which the head waters of the Rio Gila rise; and from these fastnesses, still unexplored, they have for ages been making raids upon their more civilised neighbours on all sides of them.

It is only necessary here to say a few words about the remaining sub-tribes—the Coyoteros, Pinals, and Tontos. Very little is known about themselves, far too much about their ravages. Their numbers are very variously estimated, but the general belief is that they are not numerous. They occupy the centre of the Apache country, and the few attempts as yet made to "clear them out" have resulted in complete failure. The commander at Camp Grant told me that two years ago he made a raid

into their country, but before he got very far he found enemies gathering around him in such numbers, that his small force of fifty soldiers had to beat a rapid retreat. The favourite field for plunder during the last century has been Northern Sonora. The Apaches seem never to have lived there, but their custom was to descend in bands along the whole length of the Pina-leña and Chiracahui Mountains, which, so to speak, form a bridge two hundred miles long across the Madre Plateau from the mountains north of the Rio Gila to the Sierra Madre of Mexico.

The Spaniards protected their outlying provinces from these hordes, by a complete system of military posts from San Antonio, Texas, to the Pacific. Thus the Spanish miners and Rancheros were protected, and the country became rich in flocks, herds, and productive mines, while the population increased with great rapidity. But as the power of Spain declined, and the central government at the city of Mexico degenerated into a chaos of contending factions, the troops which garrisoned these frontier stations were gradually withdrawn; the grand military system, which had so effectually done its work, was allowed to fall into decay until most of the presidios were relinquished altogether. The Apaches were not long in discovering the weakness of their wealthy neighbours, and year by year their raids became more numerous, and their ravages more destructive. At first the stock of the outlying rancheros fell a prey to the enemy, and, although probably but a small proportion of the vast herds which formerly occupied the rich grazing regions of North-eastern Sonora and Northern Chihuahua were really carried off by the red men, still the rancheros had to fly for their lives, and leave their cattle to their fate. This accounts for the herds of wild cattle and horses which are still to be found in those districts. Then the miners began to be molested, their stock, chiefly mules, driven off, and their peons so terrified that they could not be induced to remain.

When the country districts were cleared, the little towns were next attacked. The Apaches would lie concealed for days, until an opportune moment had arrived for capturing the cattle, and plundering the place. The people at last became so terrified, that if they heard of a band of Apaches fifty miles off, they very frequently left everything and fled. Against such an enemy they were almost powerless, for the mountain fastnesses from which he came lay far away to the north, and anything approaching an open fight was always avoided by him.

This state of things, in fine, going on year after year, has entirely depopulated that country. Its ruin was almost complete before the Treaty of 1854 had finally settled the question of boundary line between Mexico and the United States; but one of the chief stipulations of the treaty was that the latter government should keep the Apaches in their own country, and prevent them from making any more raids into Mexican territory. Although this was promised, it could not be accomplished; for the United States military have, up to the present time, been almost powerless in their attempts either to "wipe out" or to restrain these marauding hordes. They have neither protected their own subjects on their own soil, or sheltered the helpless Mexicans across the border. But the Apaches do not lay waste northern Sonora as they formerly did, chiefly because there is now no one to plunder; all is desolation. Destiny, however, seems to be doing what the government has failed to do; it is destroying the Apache nation. Although very few are yearly killed in fight, and the white man has not as yet penetrated into the heart of their country, still they are dying out fast; already the total population, as far as it can be estimated, is so small as to appear at first to be beneath our notice; but the scalp of many a brave settler will yet be taken before these bloodthirsty savages are crushed.

In the region lying between the Rio Verde, which is about the limit of the Apache country and the Rio Colorado, two tribes, few in number, and of the lowest type of humanity, are met with. These are the Walapais (Hualpais) and the Yampas. The latter chiefly inhabit little strips of marshy land at the bottom of the deep cañons, which debouch upon the Rio Colorado. The valleys of the Colorado from the end of the Black Cañon almost to the head of the Gulf of California, are inhabited by Indian tribes, who occupy an intermediate position between the semi-civilised Pueblo Indians and the wild Apache races.

They have for some time kept peace with the whites, but contact with them appears

to be rapidly hastening their extinction. I will only add that the Mojanes are the largest tribe, and once numbered ten thousand souls.

ODD WAYS OF GETTING A LIVING.

Some years since, three eminent statisticians, who had made the social condition of Paris their study, came to the astounding conclusion that every day upwards of five per cent of the population neither knew how to procure a meal, nor where they would sleep at night, and yet nearly the whole of them contrived to fare, after a fashion, before the day was over. "How," it may be asked, "did they manage?" With many this was their own secret, and too frequently a terrible one, divulged only before the police tribunals. Of those who got their living honestly, though none the less precariously, there were many thousands, the mere names of whose pursuits were known to few besides themselves. Even when you heard them you were scarcely the wiser, and had to ask for an explanation, which the chances were you would not comprehend, until more precise details were furnished. Supposing you were told, for instance, that such a person was a "guardian angel," that another "let out meat on hire," or "made soup bubbles," that others were contractors for "harlequins," dealers in second-hand bread, "painters of turkeys' feet," and "retailers of lighted fuel," you would be puzzled to know the objects of these various callings, and what possible need there could be for their exercise; and yet comfortable livings have been, and are even now being, made from them all.

Let us take the case of the first retailer of live fuel in Paris. The market women, who remain exposed all day long to the inclemency of the weather, invariably provide themselves with foot-warmers lined with sheet iron and little earthenware pots called "beggars," which they place on their knees to keep their fingers warm. These ladies were accustomed to have their "chaufferettes" and their "gueux" made up early every morning, and frequently twice a day by some neighbouring charbonnier, to whom they paid three sous for the two fires, and whose good pleasure they were generally obliged to wait, as he, knowing his services to be indispensable, naturally enough indulged of a morning in a late snooze.

A "bricoleur" engaged at the markets on any odd jobs that chanced to fall in his way, had noticed, during the long nights he passed waiting for a job, the negligence of these charbonniers, and made up his mind to supplant them. He had an idea which, well directed, would infallibly realise for him that fortune which every Frenchman, who is more than ordinarily poor, is constantly dreaming of. "If," said he to himself, "I can only hit upon something better and cheaper, and deliver it to the consumers instead of obliging them to come to me while I am snoring in bed, I shall soon have the entire trade in my hands. The charbonniers fill the foot-warmers with charcoal dust, which is more or less dangerous. In place of this I must find something which is perfectly inoffensive, gives as much heat, and burns a longer time." He looked about him, he reflected, he made experiments, and at length decided that lighted tan was the very thing. It gave him one especial advantage over the charbonniers, for he could proclaim that every one who patronised him need no longer fear those distressing headaches, which the fumes of charcoal invariably engendered.

He sounded the market women, asked them what they would think of a man who came round early every morning and filled their "chaufferettes" on the spot without their having to disarrange themselves in any way, and who would be at their service at all hours of the day and night.

"We should think him a good fellow," replied they, "who would do a service to us and to himself as well."

"Well, I am your man," said he. "I intend starting as a fire-seller next winter."

The mere idea of a man thinking of doing what had never been done before, aroused a universal outcry as a matter of course. Before any one had the smallest idea of how he proposed to proceed, it was decided that the thing was impossible. Our daring innovator had to put up with all sorts of jests and ironical remarks, which he bore with an equanimity arising from the self-confidence of genius. He installed himself on the banks of the Bièvre, in the suburbs of Paris, almost, indeed, in the fields, in an abandoned building composed of four bare walls and a roof. There, with some flat paving-stones picked up in the neighbourhood, and which served him for a furnace, and a large sheet-iron extinguisher, bought second-hand, he commenced operations. He had selected the centre of the Paris tanyards, in order that he might have his raw material under his hand. A truck served to transport it, and a large wooden box, lined with tin, contained the manufactured article. In this modest way our innovator set to work.

During the summer he passed his days in his improvised laboratory, almost naked, and undergoing much the same heat as a loaf in a baker's oven. Most other men would have died, but our "bricoleur" was tenacious, brave, and enterprising; he wanted, too, to have the laugh on his side, and what was of more consequence, the profit as well. Despite his day's labour, he still went to the markets to do all manner of odd jobs during the night. Early in the autumn he constructed a cart covered inside and out with strong sheet-iron, and as soon as the cold weather began to set in, on a cool and starlight night he made his appearance at the markets, dragging behind him something resembling a large black box

on wheels. At a moment when it was least expected, the following strange cry was heard, causing every head to turn in the direction whence it proceeded.

"Fire to sell! Fire to sell! ladies, fill your foot-warmers! here is the fire-seller!"

His sonorous voice had traversed the entire market, and a loud burst of laughter was the first response to this strange cry. But he had excited curiosity, and that was sufficient; first one approached, and then another; then one "wished to look," and another "wanted to know." Faithful to the traditions of French gallantry, he satisfied the curiosity of these ladies; showed them the inside of his cart, which was a perfect fiery furnace, and ended by filling their "chaufferettes" at the cost of a sou for each. By the following morning the gossips of the markets had rendered any advertisements unnecessary. Nothing was spoken of there but the new fire-seller, and it was soon the fashion for every "chaufferette" and "gueux" to be filled with his lighted fuel.

Our lucky inventor was soon able to employ from fifteen to twenty old women at his furnace, carbonising tan all the year round. He had four strong horses, which no longer dragged carts lined with sheet iron, but large wrought-iron receptacles, with their several names of Vulcan, Polyphemus, Cyclops, and Lucifer, in black letters on bright brass plates, just like the engines of a railway. From these vehicles lighted tan was distributed to all the women engaged in the different Paris markets, besides which he supplied the foot-warmers of several large houses of refuge, including the hospitals of Salpêtrière and Bicêtre, and in a few years realised a handsome fortune by his ingenuity.

In Paris not only are there breeders of "clean beasts and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls and of other things that creep upon the earth," but there are educators of squirrels, instructors of owls and canaries, professors of language for parrots, magpies and starlings, and of singing for chaffinches, goldfinches, and nightingales. Moreover, all these people manage to live by the singular professions they have chosen. Take the case of the birds' singing master, who earns quite as much as many professionals who teach singing to unfeathered bipeds. A bird that costs a few francs has its value more than quintupled after a course of lessons from one of these professors, who receive singing birds of every description as boarders, and superintend their musical education, or provide tutors for them at their own homes, in the shape of perfectly trained warblers, which are shut up night and day with the pupil whose vocal attainments are of an inferior order. Intelligent birds, after about six weeks' instruction, are able to sing two or three airs correctly, and in due course will become more or less accomplished tenors and sopranos. These feathered Marios and Pattis are produced by contract for from five to ten francs each, according to the completeness of the musical education stipulated for. The terms for professors of their own species to instruct them at their own homes is generally sixpence per week, with board in addition.

A few years ago the inhabitants of a particular street in Paris were attacked with an unaccountable irritation of the epidermis, which compelled them to scratch themselves from morn till night, no considerate Duke of Argyle being there to take compassion on them. The result was that they scarified themselves bit by bit, and any one seeing them would have thought that leprosy at least had fallen on the quarter. An inquiry was instituted by the authorities, when it was discovered that the proximity of a certain Mademoiselle Rose, breeder of ants, for the sake of their eggs for fattening young pheasants, was the cause of the calamity. On the police visiting her establishment, they encountered a woman between forty and fifty years of age, and of a terrible aspect, her face and hands being as completely tanned as though they had undergone dressing at the hands of a skilful currier. This was the result of continuous attacks on the part of her ungrateful pupils, whose inroads upon her person had forced her to encase the rest of her body in buff leather. Thus protected, she slept at night surrounded by sacks full of her vivacious merchandise in perfect security, and seemed much astonished at the police visiting her establishment.

"How can any one venture to complain of these little insects?" remarked she. "Why, I live in the very midst of them, and do not feel any the worse. Some one must have a spite against me I am certain—the world is so wicked." Despite, however, of all she could urge, Mademoiselle Rose was obliged to transport her strange boarding establishment to a perfectly isolated building beyond the barrier, and in due course the cutaneous irritation experienced by her late neighbours was allayed.

Mademoiselle Rose had her correspondents in many of the departments of France, more especially in those where very large forests exist, and paid them at the rate of a couple of francs a day. Her aggregate daily consignments were about half a score of large sacks, her profits on which amounted to thirty francs. She was proud of her trade, and maintained that she was the only person who throughly understood the fecundation of emmets, having long since made it her business to study the manners and customs of these insects. "I can make them," she used to say, "lay eggs at will, and produce ten times as many as they do in a wild state. To accomplish this I place them in a room where there is an iron stove kept heated red hot. I allow them to make their nests where they please, as it never does to interfere with them. They require great care, and the more attention you bestow upon them the more money they will bring you in. I sell their eggs to the chemists, and supply the Jardin des Plantes and most of the breeders of pheasants in the neighbourhood of Paris with them. The young birds have a particular liking for this kind of food."

Not only has Paris its breeders of ants, but

its breeders of "gentles" as well. The more than two thousand enthusiastic anglers, men and boys, which the city numbers, need a good deal of bait for their lines, and an old man, known as Père Salin, found a way to supply it. The calling is anything but a clean one, although the manufacture was, so to say, self-working. All that was requisite was, to obtain a good supply of defunct domestic animals and store them away in an old loft until they were in a state of putrescence, when the gentles were collected and packed in tin cases, known as "culotées," for which a couple of francs each were charged, and by the sale of which our gentle merchant realised a profit of about fifteen francs a day in the height of the season. In the winter he turned his attention to rearing worms for nightingales—a first-rate business in its way, yielding an ample return on an insignificant capital; the Parisians who keep nightingales being mostly rich old women and quiet tradesmen, who pay well for the favourite food of their pets.

Everybody knows the cleverly made-up "dummies" with which small tradesmen all the world over stock their shops, but few would imagine, that the handsome joints of meat and other comestibles, which are displayed in the windows of the inferior class of Paris restaurants to tempt the passing epicure, are simply hired for the purpose. Certain butchers do a considerable trade in letting out these show joints, these graceful gigots, succulent-looking fillets and elegantly trimmed cutlets, arranged with such art to catch the eyes of the unwary. To let out provisions on hire seems strange enough, but hardly more strange than letting out clean linen, which is a trade of itself in the low quarters of Paris. The garment exchanged is required to be of equal value with that let on hire, otherwise a proportionate deposit, in addition to the fixed price paid in advance for the hiring, is exacted. Among other odd things let on hire in Paris, leeches may be enumerated. You can secure the services of a dozen of these useful little animals, which are such benefactors to mankind and meet with so much ingratitude in return, at the rate of a couple of sous each, and many of their owners will bring them and set them biting for a small extra payment.

Among the more out-of-the-way Parisian types, one of the most peculiar is the individual known as the "guardian angel," who, while ordinarily the poorest of the poor, is required to be scrupulously honest, as well as firm against all attempts at cajolery, sober in the midst of temptation, and brave in the presence of danger. He flourishes chiefly in the outskirts of the city, where wine-shops, although sufficiently numerous, are not quite at every man's door as they are in many quarters of Paris, and during the day hangs about the more thriving of these establishments doing odd jobs for the proprietor in return for a scanty meal; while in the evening he waits patiently in front of the counter until his services are in requisition to assist any member of the company home, whose potations may have rendered incapable of performing that office for himself. From the moment he is engaged, he has to exhibit an almost diplomatic skill in frustrating the various schemes which wine is apt to suggest to its more ardent votaries, on finding themselves subject to unpleasant supervision. As he who has already drank too much invariably wants to continue drinking, it is of the utmost importance, when once the guardian angel has got his charge on the road home, for him to steer clear of the invitingly open doors of the various wine-shops along their line of route; he must, moreover, disregard alike his entreaties, prayers, promises, and threats, while pretending to respect them; must prevent his charge from engaging in conversation with passers-by, and keep him from entangling himself in broils; or failing this, must tear him away by brute force, and even fight for him, if necessary. If he cannot otherwise get him along, he must be able to carry him home on his back. The guardian angel is held responsible for whatever property his charge has about him, who, next day, will reward his guide, philosopher, and friend of the night before with a franc, or half a franc, according as he is liberal or mean in such matters. He is not likely to shuffle out of paying the fee, as this would subject him to being cut by all his boon companions, who would feel their own safety, in the hour of danger, imperilled, should the guardian angel of the clique be once defrauded of his due. Some of these succourers of frail humanity provide themselves with hand-barrows, in which they deposit their charge when he is in an utterly helpless state, and wheel him leisurely home. As a guardian angel's opportunities of earning money come all together, as it were, and as, moreover, he can only conduct one fallen spirit home at a time, his nightly earnings rarely exceed two francs, and commonly not more than half that amount.

The clients of the guardian angel sleep soundly as a matter of course. Should their avocations require them to be astir at sunrise, Paris has its living alarums to waken them up at the modest charge of two sous. In the neighbourhood of the great central market, where the thousands of people employed have to be at their posts by daybreak, and for this reason live as close to the spot as possible, the réveilleuse, as she is styled, abounds. Heavy sleepers, such as those who have been conducted home overnight by guardian angels, and who live on fourth or fifth floors, are far from profitable clients, as, no matter the amount of time wasted in rousing them, the fee is still only two sous. By many of her clients the réveilleuse is received with growls interspersed with oaths; but, nowise intimidated, she replies with smiles and the soft answers that turn away wrath. She is nevertheless resolute, and never quits a client until he is thoroughly awake.

Another strange Parisian calling is that of the wedding poet, who watches the announce-

ment of forthcoming marriages among the small shopkeeping class, and takes his notes of the bride, the colour of her hair, complexion, and style of face and figure on the steps of the mairie as the wedding party enter the building. On the shoemaker's principle, that there is nothing like leather, he remarks to the bridegroom, whom he subsequently intercepts at the door of the restaurant where the "nôce" is to be celebrated, that a wedding without poetry is deprived of all its sentiment, and then proceeds to show that happy individual the little string of compliments, which have already done duty hundreds of times, but which he gives him to understand have been inspired by the charming bride of to-day. To remove any feeling of apprehension which might be entertained with regard to his appearance in the midst of an elegant company in threadbare attire, he takes care to inform the bridegroom that he has a dress suit at home—meaning that, if engaged, he knows where to hire one. After dinner he recites his poetical rhapsody in praise of the bride, for which his fee is ordinarily fifteen francs, though he will not disdain a smaller sum.

Another curious specialist was the man who gained his living by guessing riddles, that is to say the rebuses, charades, and logogriphes which it was the fashion with certain newspapers to publish periodically, with the view, it is supposed, of sharpening the intellects of their more obtuse subscribers. In those quarters of the city where the class of small renters abound, an extraordinary excitement used to prevail at all the cafés, estaminets, and boarding houses on the mornings these intellectual problems made their appearance. Profiting by this circumstance, a small band of Œdipuses arose who, as early as possible after the papers were published, and they had themselves solved the enigma of the day, commenced their rounds to the various cafés, and for a fee of five sous privately furnished the proprietors with a written solution of the problem. In these golden days riddle-guessers with a large connexion would make as much as forty francs out of a single rebus.

Until ousted by recent demolitions, or by virtue of sanitary regulations, there existed, in the very heart of Paris, close to the College of France in fact, a town-bred goatherd who kept his herd, more than fifty in number, up five pairs of stairs in a couple of ordinary sized rooms divided into as many stalls as he had goats, and made his living by selling their milk. Dressed in a short jacket, gaiters, sabots, and broad-brimmed hat, and with the orthodox crook in hand, he used daily to drive the animals to pasture some couple of miles off, ten at a time; and to see of a morning the goats descending the polished stairs, slippery as any Alpine glacier, was a singular sight. The man had been originally a bricklayer's labourer, whose wife gave birth to three children at a single confinement, when, according to the prevailing custom under such circumstances, she was provided by the authorities with a couple of goats to assist her in suckling them. Wife and children, however, alike died, and the bereaved husband and father, finding himself in undisturbed possession of the animals, abandoned the hod for the crook, and became a breeder and tender of kids, and dealer in goats' milk. He nourished his animals in accordance with certain formulæ drawn up for him by some medical students, and over their different stalls were inscribed not only their names, but the particular kind of food they were fed upon. Thus we read:

"Mélie Morvanguilotte, fed upon carrots, for Madame M., suffering from disease of the liver.

"Jeanne la Ross, hay and mint, Mademoiselle A., chlorosis.

"Marie Noel, born at the stable, by Marius out of Jeanette, nourished upon iodurated hay, for the son of Monsieur R., poorness of blood."

The colouring of meerschaum pipes wholesale by chemical means has given the death-blow to a particular industry which used to thrive in Paris. While walking along the quays one was accustomed to meet a tribe of vagabonds strolling gravely up and down, smoking pipes of a value that seemed to belie their honest possession of them. One naturally asked oneself how it was that all these Parisian lazzaroni possessed such pipes, and managed to pass their entire time in smoking. It turned out that the pipes were not exactly their own, and that smoking was their trade. The way they went to work was this: They smoked a common pipe until it was well coloured, and then exchanged it for an uncoloured pipe of superior quality, which, after colouring, they exchanged in turn, and so they went on until the pipe dealer felt himself warranted in entrusting them with pipes of some value, in exchange for those they bought. These they would colour at the rate of from half a franc to a franc each, according to size, payable half in cash and half in tobacco at the wholesale price. Such adepts had they become, and so laboriously did they puff and blow, that, with a consumption of half a franc's worth of tobacco, they could produce one large or a couple of smaller masterpieces a day, which gave them a net profit of fifty centimes, thus expended by them:

	Centimes.
An Arlequin (scraps of meat mixed with vegetables and other ingredients) .	10
A "canon" (of some violet-coloured liquid called wine)	10
Bread, or a pound of potatoes in their skins	10
A "goutte" of "casse-poitrine" (spirit seasoned with cayenne pepper) .	10
Lodging for the night on four foot feathers (straw)	10
	50

It would be difficult to reduce material life to more minute proportions than these, still the competition was brisk as long as the trade lasted. Science, however, gave a death-blow to it, and meerschaum pipes are now-a-days coloured by a chemical process, which consists

in soaking them in a decoction of tobacco after slightly heating them. Pipes coloured by this means are quite as much perfumed as by the old process, and are coloured with greater regularity; above all, they are cleaner, which is a special recommendation.

Some years ago attempts were made in Paris to unite material and mental aliment in various ingenious ways. There were proprietors of reading-rooms who presented their subscribers with so many tickets for dinner at particular restaurants with which they had entered into arrangements, and there were one or two publications which followed the example. The Figaro, on its part, gave a case of oranges to every subscriber for twelve months, and so recently as last Christmas the Etendard, a grave political journal, sought to attract its readers by bribing them with boxes of bonbons. The restaurants, in their turn, tried to secure regular customers by serving with the hors d'œuvres an instalment of some exciting romance by a popular writer, thereby enabling their patrons to gratify their literary and gastronomic tastes at the same moment, and acquire a perfect library of fiction in the course of the year. The idea found an imitator in the proprietor of a wine shop, who promised to clothe his customers from head to foot, in the very latest fashion, free of charge. This was a "reform of tailors' bills" not to be disregarded by "thirsty souls," at any rate, who, by purchasing right off a "piece" of wine, or a few litres of brandy, could obtain a coat or a pair of trousers, while even an ordinary "nip"—a "velvet on the stomach," as the Parisians term it—if repeated often enough, brought its reward. Taking a "canon" of wine, or a "demi-setier" of brandy every morning, and an "absinthe" in the afternoon, for a couple of months, procured you an extra superfine hat, while an additional month's consumption would entitle you to a pair of boots instead. Bibulous individuals, who preferred receiving their bonuses right off, could, after the requisite amount of consumption, secure a showy necktie or an electro-gilt ring before quitting the counter.

Not the least odd way—not of getting a living, for the slack seasons are too frequent for this, but of picking up francs in Paris—is that pursued by some of the wine-shop keepers in the neighbourhood of the Place de la Roquette, where all the executions take place. Our French neighbours have not yet followed the good example we have set them of erecting the scaffold within the prison walls; still the authorities, with a sort of instinct of the demoralizing effect of these exhibitions, are particularly careful to keep the days fixed for execution secret till the very latest moment. With the view that those who have a craving for these displays may not be disappointed, the neighbouring wine-shop keepers undertake for a stated sum, to telegraph to their respective clients the moment preparations for erecting the guillotine have commenced. Were executions more frequent, the Parisians, with their spirit of enterprise in all that relates to spectacular matters, would no doubt establish a regular agency on the boulevards similar to those in connexion with the theatres, where a plan of the "place" would be visible, and reserved seats might be engaged.

MORE OF WILLS AND WILL MAKING.

THE COCLOUGH BATTLE. IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

IN the county of Wexford are the ruins of a fine old abbey, converted into a country-house, with a wall, here and there many feet thick, and a little window or two so deeply embayed, that the stranger opening them fancies he is plunging his arm into some deep hole. Round it economic modernisers have crusted little rooms and additions, but the abbey portion was held a sad drawback, the country gentlemen about considering it a sort of "rat-hole." It was full of curious panelling, recesses, &c., on the existence of which the present owners might well congratulate themselves. It is called Tintern Abbey. The rental was about ten thousand a year, and towards the end of the last century it was enjoyed by a Sir Vesey Coclough, a dissipated gentleman of the old Irish school. He had three relations, one named Cæsar, known among the people there as "The Barrister," or, more correctly, as "The Counshillor," who later became Chief Justice of a colony; Dudley, a clergyman; and Sarsfield. Sir Vesey was exactly the "bold, bad man" that figures in melodramas—a true roysterer, and so partial to the society of ladies other than his wife, and so scandalously noisy in the enjoyment of their company, that the lady was driven from the house, and obliged to live in a neighbouring country-town with barely the necessaries of life, where she struggled to bring up her children. But for friends, she would literally have starved. Meanwhile the brothers and other relations held carnival at the family mansion, and succeeded in obtaining from Sir Vesey advantageous leases and other benefits, keeping his mind all the time duly inflamed. The career of most members of his family was in keeping. Every one was in difficulties. The Rev. Dudley's "necessities," as they were called, were always pressing; and the Chief Justice became speedily much embarrassed in his circumstances. "His salary as Chief Justice," says the brief, gently enough, "being inadequate to support the dignity of his office; as it would appear that a Colonial Chief Justiceship was at that time regarded with more consideration than at present." The later career of this gentleman was very trying to him, as he had to live in retirement in London.

The "Counsellor" was cousin to the owner of Tintern Abbey, and both were called Cæsar—a favorite family name. By and by, the two cousins had a falling out, and as it was always handsomely understood that near relationship should be no bar to an arrangement, they went out and fought a duel. This, instead of producing "satisfaction," strange to say, completely estranged the relations; a permanent

breach took place between them, and it was believed they never could be reconciled. This, however, is anticipating a little.

Sir Vesey's eldest son, Cæsar Coclough, thus disowned, and thus brought up in privation, determined to seek his fortune away from his native land, and began a career that is almost picturesque. He went to London first, about the year 1790, where he tried to support himself by writing for the press. He was a man of refined tastes, with a turn for mechanical inventions, engineering, chemistry, and music—accomplishments which were to be developed by foreign travel and practice. About the year 1792, being then about twenty-six, he ran over to Paris full of spirits, and prepared to enjoy his expedition. His impressions of the place at that time were gay, and told graphically. "I can now manage pork tripes, and I take breakfast à la mode Français, without cloath or butter, and dine at one, two, or three o'clock off nasty, stinking stews; in fine, I am quite a Frenchman, except that I drink much and talk little. I have as yet had no tidings of my shirts, and really have had but four these two months; but that is full enough for Paris, where dirt, parade, pleasure, and politics are the springs of action. Overstreet and Betty saw the king and queen this day, and one of the twenty-three playhouses, and were quite sick of it before half was over." He naturally took a fancy to the lively city, had his lodgings there by the year, and was there again in August of the same year. There was a general nervousness then in Paris, when many were inclined to quit it; but all the ports were strictly guarded, and no one allowed out. "When all the conspirators are taken, then the passports will be renewed, and then I intend going to Rouen, ready to pass into England in case any affraca should take place. Something is wanting much here; really there is too much licentiousness." In October he was unable to get away, and was heading his letters enthusiastically, "Fourth year of liberty, and the first of Equality and the French Republic." He had quite caught the new enthusiasm, had a conversation with "Roland, the minister of the Intérieur," and told him of the necessity for sending arms to Ireland. Everything was growing dearer by one-half from what it was the year before. The exchange on England was about twenty. At the ordinary where he dined they cut off a dish, but the price was still only fifteen-pence. He was at a curious dinner in November, where the English, Scotch, and Irish, with other strangers, met to celebrate the victory of the French Republic. Lord Edward Fitzgerald proposed a toast that all hereditary titles should be abolished, and Mr. Coclough sat opposite to Tom Paine, and talked with him on the state of Ireland. It was agreed between them that there ought to be an address to the English people, "to prevent the court circulating poison about the Irish." On his birthday he was going to make all his friends drink to the health of "Good citizen Coclough." But in January he wrote a curious letter, in a whisper, as it were, which speaks the awe-stirring character of the times: "Say not one word of politics in future. There will be no war except one particular thing takes place. Before this is ten miles, Louis the unfortunate will be no more. I attended his process for eleven hours yesterday, and he was condemned to death in the space of twenty-four hours by a majority of (I counted) thirty-two. Adieu. The king is going." In March, he went to the theatre one Sunday night, "and it was as full as if all France was in the state of riches and luxury that usually accompanies a continued and profound peace. The natural levity is such that I could find numbers of characters like my father here: in fact, my father, as a Frenchman, would be called a galant et honnête homme, for vices here of the most enormous kind are not considered such." Things, however, were growing dark for the English. Money was not to be obtained. The future French emigrés were bidding with each other for bills on England, but the difficulty was to get them into the country, and by writing four letters, there was a chance of one arriving. A speculating Englishman could make fifty per cent of his bill on London. Rare articles were selling by auction, and he was buying until he became, as he said, "like a caravan." But with the war with England all these residents were converted into détenus, and sent to St. Germains, where Cocloughwas put into the story over the room where James the Second died. Every degree of humanity was shown to them.

His life during this anxious period must have been a strange one. At times all his supplies were cut off for months, and then the generosity of friends in France aided him. At other seasons he was cast into prison, and once was very near being included in one of the death-lists of the Reign of Terror. It was surprising that, with such recollections, he could have wished to linger in the country. But all the while he was laying up a store of grudges against his father and other relations at home, who were treating him ill, taking advantage of his absence, and perhaps praying that some bonnet rouge would denounce him, and hurry him up to the nearest lanterne.

In 1794 Sir Vesey died, but his son and heir was a prisoner of war. Relations of his, however, took charge of the estate for a time, and one of them got the abbey newly roofed, having some three years before got a hint to do so, from the dining-room cornice and ceiling tumbling in, and smashing his bed to pieces. The exile was allowed to make his way down to Lausanne, where he lived under surveillance, and found it so attractive that nothing could tempt him home. A prisoner of fortune in those days would not have found it hard to obtain release. His friends informed him that it was intended to lay a tax of sixteen per cent on old Irish absentees, but the news did not stir him. He went on to Ulm.

It was now the year '98, and the Irish gentleman, who was a democrat in Paris, was to feel a little acutely the result of those doctrines nearer home. The rebellion was drawing on.

In June, the brother, who was in Ireland, was writing over sketches of rebellion as graphic as those he had received. He had gone up to Dublin, and found himself under martial law. There was no business doing, and every one had to be at their homes by nine o'clock. He accordingly left, and set sail for Wexford in a little sloop, and found everything there in consternation. Only the night before some four thousand of the insurgents had assembled outside the town, and he relates, very graphically, the engagement between them and the two hundred men of the North Cork Militia, in which the rebels killed every one of the party but four. "I should have told you," he adds, in an oddly placed way, "that my mother is in Dublin. The whole country became later at their mercy, and Tom M'Cord and I, and all the Protestants, retreated into Duncannon; not that I was a bit afraid of our own people, for there was nothing they dreaded so much as being forced, through dire necessity, to join the insurgents." So he and Tom M'Cord sailed in a little sloop and got over to Wales. In his next, he begins that he takes up his pen "to write the saddest letter you ever did, or, I hope, you ever will, receive." He gives a little vignette from this bloody chronicle. "My Uncle Tom was killed at Arklow charging the rebels at the head of his troops; but now to freeze your very blood; my unfortunate Uncle Cornelius was surrounded and kept a prisoner in his own house by the rebels, when, in order to save his life, he supplied them with provisions; for doing which, when the army was victorious and retook Wexford, they tried him by a court-martial for aiding the rebels, and he was hanged this day week. John Coclough, of Craig, was also hanged; but he was always suspected of being a United man. William Hatten, John May, and many others are hanged, and, I suppose, all the papist merchants and gentlemen of Wexford also suffered. There were many Protestants, who, to save their own lives, were christened by a priest, and pretended to side with the rebels: such as my Uncle Cornelius, Tom Vokes, Tom Richards, and many more. The women were not injured anywhere, but were christened." His brother replied: "Judge of the horror of this perfidy that condemned the innocent, while two others were losing their lives in the service; but, my dear John, this is familiar. I fear the tears that we have already shed are not to be so soon dried, for the passions once roused to the point they are, mutual vengeance and ferocity produce long-continued effects." But, presently, the Irish brother had to write that he was in confinement at Dublin, for there had been "several attempts made by Tottenham of Ross and the Protestant ascendancy party to suborn witnesses to swear against me, but in vain." He had twice asked to be tried by court-martial; and Tom M'Cord, the owner of the sloop, was included in the same warrant, but had escaped to London. His vessel was seized and detained.

The exile travelling about the Continent took these disastrous events very philosophically. He was sure that justice would presently "rise from the troubled surf."

The Irish brother was at last enlarged, and, of course, after such an escape, returned a frantic loyalist. "I have been here," he writes, "three weeks, and can't bear almost to look out, on account of my meeting the villains of this place, for such a horrid set of hell-hounds never inhabited any country; they were intent on nothing but blood and murder—the greatest savages of Africa or America were civilisation itself compared to them. You cannot, nor did I, conceive it possible that man could be so ferocious; as it was, B. Harvey Keogh and J. C. were repeatedly in most imminent danger, and Keogh was taken out to be piked."

A little scene in Dublin. "Last Monday I met Chas. Tottenham at Waddy's door. I told him he was the greatest rascal in Ireland, but I knew he would not take the notice of it a gentleman ought; he never made the smallest reply; and on the Friday following I met him in the same place, and told him the same story, when he mustered up passion enough to call me a rascal. *I told him he should hear from me;* but he was resolved he should not, for he went to Judge Downs himself and gave information, and that evening I was taken into custody and brought before the judge, and bound in six thousand pounds to keep the peace for three years." This abortive attempt at a rencontre is amusing, but the ingenious mode of giving a challenge, because the other was goaded into using the word "rascal," is highly characteristic. Here is a sketch of the two maid-servants: "Katty and Kitty are at lodgings. Moll is at present at Solmestown, but she is to go to Tintern. She is fallen to drink again, and is not perfectly in her senses. Katty and she can't agree at all. Katty takes the drop sometimes herself, and then is rather saucy." The sale of a borough in these pure days, and the terms of sale: "It is at length sold to Lord Lismore and Sir William Meadows—acceptances for eight thousand pounds payable in ninety-one days, and five thousand pounds payable with interest in one year." We get glimpses of all sorts of strange arrangements, as "Lord Lismore wants to sell the corporation of Enniscorthy; he asks five hundred pounds, probably he would take four hundred pounds."

It was now the year 1806, so that the Lord of Tintern bids fair to become a regular foreigner. Nothing could draw him homewards, he was so absorbed in study and science. He was once more a détenu, for the war had broken out, and he seemed to have grown to dislike the notion of returning. He was devoted to his inventions. "Such pursuits," he wrote when they were pressing him to become a candidate for his county, "excite *neither envy nor gratitude*," which was something in the shape of an epigram, "and to them I owe my present tranquillity." For the silk manufacturers of a town memorialised the government, with the legal authorities of the place, that he should be allowed to reside on parole, an exception to the treatment of the

other English, whom Napoleon treated with a scandalous rigour. In return he taught them the economy of pit coal, and its use in that part, wood being so scarce as to be sold by the pound. He enjoyed himself so much and was so happy, that he protested his apothecary's bill during three years was but ten shillings. The "only canker" that disturbed him was the loss of his dear relatives at home; and rather touchingly, and even poetically, he complained how his friends "are in turn, at different hours of the night and day, present to my heart-felt remembrance, a new face or voice enchains the ideas of resemblance to one or other, and the momentary eve of a night's sleep transports me amongst you, and following dreams let me enjoy the momentary happiness of your visionary society." Still, when we think of his many years' absence, in a great degree voluntary, one is inclined to recal the rough cynic's answer, in Boswell, to the anxious father, who was mourfully bewailing the possible condition of his son at school: "Then why don't you take a post-chaise and go to him?"

At last, however, in the year 1814, and after the death, in a duel, of the faithful and affectionate Irish brother who had so long managed his affairs, the exile returned to his native land and to his estates, after an absence of nearly thirty years. He was a thorough foreigner, and some said a perfect French atheist. He had passed through a deal of privation and had borne some imprisonment. He was now re-established, and in 1818 was married and returned member for his county.

The surprise of meeting after that long interval approached the dramatic. The great Irish brothers—one was about six feet three in height, rude, rough, boisterous, noisy, trained in the wildest school of wild Irish manners—were ready to burst with laughter at the strange Frenchified relation who had returned to them. A small, dandified, perhaps "mincing" petit maître, that read French poetry, and was powdered à la mode. *They* came on him with quite the shock of a cold shower-bath. He shrank away from their noisy roysterings, which to him seemed "low," coarse, and even appalling, while they, with a good-natured contempt, determined to make something "like a man" of him, teach him to drink to his tenth tumbler, like other Irish gentlemen, to fight duels, pass through roaring elections, and the other agrémens of Irish life. These well-meant attempts succeeded only partially, and their rough education and rude jokes seemed to have had the effect only of inspiring him with a lasting horror and a rooted dislike.

The lady he selected for his wife was a woman of strong will and purpose, "of a haughty, irritable, and violent temper," "sometimes approaching to phrensy," "jealous of the slightest interference, disappointment, or control;" in short, precisely the sort of ambitious heroine who ought to figure in a will case. And here it may be noticed that a little consideration of will cases, and indeed causes of other descriptions, often discover an almost Sallustian tone of description, etching out characters, &c., in most unexpected quarters; witnesses and letter-writers frequently describing features of human character and human incidents with a graphic power and an unaffected force of language that many a professional writer might envy.

This heroine, then, who possessed great attractions, it was insisted, laid herself out from the day of the marriage for the one aim of being mistress of Tintern Abbey during her husband's life, as well as after his death. The game was rather a difficult one: there were innumerable relations to play against—squireens, clergymen, all watching and eager. To the future heir—a nephew—she had a special animosity; and there were, of course, the usual schemes to reach the well-watched testator—ambuscades with the assumption that he was under intimidation, and before *her*, dare not exhibit his feelings. Such a situation, from its very uncertainty, from the speculation as to the contents of the coming will, which, after all, their fond hopes led them to believe would be in their favour—a situation protracted through many long years—must be one painfully dramatic. But as time wore on, and he grew old, she took some measures of jealous precaution. He was not allowed to read one of his letters without her previous permission, and frequently, perusal. Some she burned. She gave him her orders haughtily, and, it was said, used to strengthen her behests by such bold language as, "By G—d it shall be done!" But this and much more duly sworn to, may have been an invention on the side of the inflamed relations, driven frantic by what was impending. Her favourite theme to him was a harsh disparagement of their merits, "frequently (*but falsely*) stating to him that they were swindlers, drunkards, and blackguards, *in order to lower them in his estimation*," the naïveté of which inuendo is highly characteristic. It was charged, too, that she commenced her nefarious plot by setting her husband against his mother, a poor old lady of ninety-seven, who was ordered out of his house in Molesworth-street, where she had long lived rent free, at the suggestion, it was said, of her imperious daughter-in-law.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read on Thursday, April 29, at Chester; Saturday, May 1 (Morning Reading), St. James's Hall, London; Monday, May 3, Cardiff; Tuesday, May 4, Swansea; Wednesday, May 5, Gloucester; Thursday, May 6, Hereford; Saturday Morning, May 8, St. James's Hall, London; Tuesday Evening, May 11, Saturday Morning, May 22, and Tuesday Evening, May 25, St. James's Hall, London.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A Serial Story by the Author of "Black Sheep."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XIII. CLOUDING OVER.

Gertrude Creswell was not wrong in her supposition that Mr. Benthall intended asking her to become his wife. It is not often that mistakes are made in such matters, despite all we read of disappointed maidens and blighted hopes. Life is so very practical in this portion of the nineteenth century that, except in very rare cases, even love affairs scarcely care to avail themselves of a halo of romance, of that veil of mystery and secrecy which used to be half the charm of the affair. "The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love" are now never seen, in anything like good society, where the intention of two young persons to marry is stated as soon as—sometimes before—they have met, and the "understanding" between them is fully recognised by all their friends; while as to the "matron's glance which would such looks reprove," it is entirely obsolete, and never brought into play, save when the bashful virgins bend their sidelong looks of love on good-looking young paupers in the government offices or the army—a proceeding which it is but fair to say the bashful virgins "of the period" very rarely indulge in. Gertrude Creswell was as unlike a "girl of the period," in the present delightful acceptation of that phrase, as can well be imagined—that is to say, she was modest, frank, simple, honest, and without guile; but she was a woman, and she knew perfectly that she had engaged George Benthall's attention and become the object of his affection, although she had had no previous experience in the matter. They had lived such quiet lives, these young ladies, and had slid so tranquilly from the frilled-trouser-wearing and les-graces-playing period of childhood to the long skirts, croquet, and flirtation of marriageable age, that they had hardly thought of that largest component part of a girl's day-dream, settling in life. There was with them no trace of that direct and unmistakable line of demarcation known as "coming out," that mountain-ridge between the cold dreary Switzerland of lessons, governesses, mid-day dinner, backboard, piano practice, and early bed; and the lovely glowing Italy of balls, bouquets, cavaliers, croquet, Park, Row, crush-room, country-house, French novel, and cotillon at five A.M. So Gertrude had never had a love affair of any kind before, but she was very quiet about it, and restrained her natural tendency to gush, principally for Maud's sake. She thought it might seem unkind in her to make a fuss, as she described it, about her having a lover before Maud, who was as yet unsuited with that commodity. It puzzled Gertrude immensely, this fact of her having proved attractive to any one while Maud was by; she was accustomed to think so much of her elder sister, on whom she had endeavoured to model herself to the best of her ability, that she could not understand any one taking notice of her while her sister was present. Throughout her life, with her father, with her mother, and now with her uncle, Gertrude Creswell had always played the inferior part to her sister; she was always the humble confidante in white muslin to Maud in Tilburina's white satin, and in looks, manner, ability, or disposition, was not imagined to be able to stand any comparison with the elder girl.

But Mr. Benthall, preferring Gertrude,

had given long and serious thought as to his future. He had taken the trouble to do something which he knew he ought to have done long since, but which he had always resolutely shirked—to look into the actual condition of his school, and more especially of his boarders; and after careful examination, he confessed to himself, as he smoked a costly cigar, pacing slowly up and down the lane which was ablaze with apple-blossom—it would never have done to have been caught in the wildly dissipated act of smoking by any of the boys, or, indeed, by a good many of the villagers—he confessed to himself that he wanted a companion, and his establishment wanted a head, and that Mrs. Covey, excellent in her way, was scarcely a proper representative of the female element in the household of the head-master of Helmingham school. Thus minded, Mr. Benthall rode over to Woolgreaves, was received by a benevolent grin from the stable-helper, to whom he confided his horse (confound those fellows, with what an extraordinary facility they blunder on to the right scent in these matters!), went into the house, paid his suit to the two young ladies, had but a few words with Miss Maud, whose services, in consequence of an unfavourable turn of Mrs. Ashurst's illness, were required upstairs, and a prolonged interview of a very satisfactory kind with Miss Gertrude. With a portion only of this interview have we to do; the remaining portion can be much "more easily imagined than described," at least by those to whom the circumstances of the position have been, or actually are, familiar—perhaps no inconsiderable proportion of the world.

"By the way," said Mr. Benthall, as, after a third ridiculous attempt at pretending he was going, he had again settled himself in his chair, but had not thought it necessary to give up Miss Gertrude's hand, which he had taken in his own when he had last risen to say adieu—"by the way, Miss—well, Gertrude—what was that you were saying last time I was here about Mrs. Creswell?"

"What I was saying about Mrs. Creswell? I don't exactly know, but it wouldn't be very difficult to guess! I hate her!" said Gertrude, roundly.

"Ah, yes!" said Mr. Benthall, "I think I managed to gather that from the general tone of your conversation, but what were you saying specifically?"

"I don't know what specifically means, I think!" said Gertrude, after a moment's reflection; "but I do know why I hate her!"

"And that is because——"

"Because she pretends to be so awfully superior, and goes in to be so horribly good and demure, and all that kind of thing," said Miss Gertrude, growing very becomingly red with excitement. "She always reminds me of the publican in the parable, who, 'standing afar off'—you know what I mean! I always thought that the publican went in to draw more attention to himself by his mock humility than all the noise and outcry which the Pharisee made, and which any one would have put down to what it was worth! and that's just like Miss A.—I mean Mrs. Creswell—I'm sure I shall call her Miss A. to my dying day, Maud and I are so accustomed to speak of her like that—you'd think butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, and this is so shocking, and that is so dreadful, and she is so prim, and so innocent, and so self-sacrificing—and then she steps in and carries off our uncle, for whom all the unmarried girls in the county were angling years ago, and had given up the attempt in despair!"

"But you must have seen all this in her for months, ever since she has been in the same house with you! And yet it is only since she achieved her conquest of your uncle that you've been so bitter against her!"

"Not at all, George! That's so like a man, always to try and say an unpleasant thing about the want of generosity and all that! Not at all! I don't mind so much about her marrying uncle; if he's such a silly old thing as to like to marry her, that's his look-out, and not ours. And I've no doubt she'll make him what people call a good wife, awfully respectable, and all that kind of thing. And I don't believe she's ever been in love with anybody else, notwithstanding your stories about that Mr. Joyce. I like your talking about women's gossip, sir; a fine story that was you brought us, and all started by some old woman, wasn't it? But what annoyed me worst was the way in which she wrote about making Maud give up her music-room! I call that regularly cruel, because she knew well enough that Maud was awfully fond of that room, and—and that's what makes me hate her!"

"And Maud seemed to think that that was to be but the beginning of a series of unpleasant measures."

"Well, you know Maud's blood is regularly up in this matter, and of course she

is prejudiced to a certain extent, and I don't know—I'm not clever, you know, like she is—how far she's right. But I think plainly enough that Miss A.—I mean Mrs. Creswell—intends to have her own way in everything, and as she doesn't like us, and never did, she'll set much against us, and goodness knows the result!"

Mr. Benthall could not have been described as "goodness," nor was he a particularly far-seeing man, but he thought he knew the result. As he cantered slowly home that afternoon he thought the matter out, and came to the conclusion that if Mrs. Creswell were the woman she was described, she would tolerate but for a very little time the presence of two persons so obnoxious in the same house with her, and that when that climax arrived, it was the time for the Rev. George Benthall to step in and do himself and everybody else concerned a good turn by taking Gertrude off her uncle's hands.

There was very little doubt that the shelter of the Woolgreaves roof and the luxuries of the Woolgreaves establishment would be required by one of its inmates for but a very short time. Mrs. Ashurst's strength, which had been gradually declining, began to fail her altogether, and it was evident to all that the end was at hand. Dr. Osborne, who was in constant attendance—and the little man never showed to such advantage as under the most trying professional circumstances—shook his head sadly, and confessed that it had now become a question of days. But the old lady was so tranquil, and apparently so happy, that he hesitated to summon her daughter, more especially as the newly-married couple were so soon expected home. The girl who attended on the old lady in the capacity of night-nurse had a different experience from Dr. Osborne so far as the tranquillity of the patient was concerned. She knew when she was awake—and considering that she was a full-blooded, heavy, bacon-fed lass, she really deserved much credit for the manner in which she propped her eyelids up with her forefingers, and resorted to sniffing instead of snoring—she knew that Mrs. Ashurst had very disturbed nights, when she lay moaning and groaning and plucking at the bed-clothes, and constantly murmuring one phrase: "For my sake! Lord help her! God grant it may turn out right! She did it, I know, for my sake!" Gradually she lost consciousness, and in her wandering state she repeated nothing but this one phrase, "For my sake!" Occasionally she would smile placidly and look round the room as though in admiration of its comfort and appointments, but then the sad look would come over her face, and she would repeat the melancholy sentence in the saddest of tones. Dr. Osborne, when he eventually came to hear of this, and to witness it, confessed he could not understand it. It was not a case for the College of Surgeons, nor get-at-able by the pharmacopœia; it was what Shakespeare said—he'd heard his girl read it—about not being able to minister to a mind diseased, or something of that sort; and yet, God bless him, Mrs. Ashurst was about the last woman to have anything of the kind. However, he should be deuced glad when little Marian—ah, mustn't call her little Marian now, beg pardon, Mrs. Creswell—funny, wasn't it? couldn't get that into his head! had known 'em all so long, and never thought—nor anybody else for the matter of that. However, that's neither here nor there. What's that? Proverb? Eh, "there's no fool like an——" No, no, mustn't say that before him, please. What was he saying? Oh, he should be glad when Mrs. Creswell came home, and took her mother under her own charge.

Mr. and Mrs. Creswell came home two days before they were expected, or rather before they had originally intended. Marian had heard of her mother's illness, and expressed a wish to go to her at once—a wish which of course decided Mr. Creswell's course of action. The tenants and villagers, to whom the news of Mr. Creswell's intended political experiment had been imparted during his absence, had intended to give him a welcome in which they could express their sentiments on flags and mottoes and triumphal arches, and they had already arranged an alliterative sentence, in which "Creswell and Conservatism!" each picked out with gigantic capital letters, were to play conspicuous parts; but Dr. Osborne, who got wind of what was threatened, drove off to Brocksopp in his little pony chaise, and there took Mr. Teesdale, the agent, into confidence, and revealed to him the real state—hovering between life and death — in which Mrs. Ashurst then lay. On the reception of this information, Mr. Teesdale took upon himself to hint that the intended demonstration had better be postponed for a more convenient season; and accordingly Mr. and Mrs. Creswell, arriving by the train at Brocksopp, and having their carriage to meet them, drove through the streets when the working people were all

engaged at their factories and mills, and made their way home, scarcely exciting any recognition.

The two girls, on the alert at hearing the wheels of the approaching carriage, rushed to the door, and were honoured by being permitted to kiss the cheek of the bride, as she swept past them. No sooner had they kissed their uncle, and were all assembled in the drawing-room, than Marian asked after her mother.

"I'm afraid you will find her very much changed, Mrs. Creswell," said Maud, who, of course, was spokeswoman. "Mrs. Ashurst is very much weaker, and has—has occasional fits of wandering, which——"

"Why was I not informed of this?" asked Marian, in her chilliest tones. "Were you both so much engaged that you could not manage to let me have a line to tell me of this change in my mother's state?"

"Maud wanted to write and tell you, but Dr. Osborne wouldn't let her," blustered out Gertrude. "She never will say anything for her herself, but I'm sure she has been most attentive, Maud has, and I don't think——"

"I'm sorry to interrupt this lobgesang, Gertrude; but I must go up and see my mother at once. Be good enough to open the door." "And she sailed out of the room," Gertrude said, afterwards, "as though she'd been a duchess! In one of those rustling silks, don't you know, as stiff as a board, which look as if they'd stand up by themselves!"

When Marian reached her mother's door, and was just about entering, she stopped short, arrested by a low dull moaning sound which fell upon her ear. She listened with her blood curdling within her and her lips growing cold and rigid. Still it came, that low hollow moan, monotonous, dreadful. Then she opened the door, and, passing swiftly in, saw her mother lying tossing on the bed, plucking furtively at the bedclothes, and moaning as she moved her head wearily in its unrest.

"Mother!" cried Marian — "mother, darling mother! don't you know me?" And she flung herself on the bed, and, taking the old woman's head in her arms, softly kissed her lips.

The bright, the momentarily bright, eyes looked at her without seeing her—she knew that — and presently moved away again round the room, as Mrs. Ashurst raised her long lean hand, and, pointing to the wall, said, "Pictures—and books—all fine—all fine!—for my sake!"—uttering the last words in a deep hissing whisper.

Marian was too shocked to speak. Shocked not frightened, she had much natural strength of mind, and had had experience of illness, though not of this character. But she was shocked to see her mother in such a state, and deeply enraged at the fact that the increase of the illness had been kept from her. "Don't you know me?" she repeated; "mother, darling mother, don't you know me? Marian, poor Marian! your daughter Marian!"

"Ah, don't blame her!" said the old woman, in the same whisper. "Poor Marian! poor dear Marian! my Jimmy's pet! She did it for my sake, all for my sake! Carriages and horses and wine for me—wine, rich strong wine for me—all for me, all for my sake, poor Marian! all for my sake!"

"Is she often in this way? Does she often repeat those horrible words?" asked Marian of the servant, of whose presence she then, on raising her head, became for the first time aware.

"Oh yes, miss—I mean, mum!—constantly, mum! She never says anything else, mum, but about some things being for her sake, mum. And she haven't said anything else, miss, since she was off her head—I mean, since she was delirrous, mum——"

"Does she always mention my name—Marian?"

"Always, mum, 'poor Marian'—savin' your presence, and not meanin' a liberty—is what she do say, miss, and always about 'for her sake' it's done, whatever it is, which I don't know."

"How long has she been like this? How long have you been with her?"

"A week last Wednesday, mum, was when I was brought from the laundry to be nurse, and if you find your collars and cuffs iron-moulded, mum, or not properly got up, you'll understand it's not me, Dr. Osbin having had me fetched here as bein' strong for nussin' and a good sitter up o' nights——"

"Yes, I understand!" said Marian, vacantly; "you won't have to sit up any more; I shall relieve you of that. Just wait here; I shall be back in a few minutes."

Marian hurried down-stairs, and in the drawing-room found her husband, the two girls, and Dr. Osborne, who had joined the party. There must have been some peculiar expression in her face, for she had no sooner opened the door than Mr. Creswell, looking up, hurried across the room and took her hand, saying, anxiously, "What

is the matter, Marian? what is it, my love?"

"Simply that I arrive here to find my mother wandering and imbecile—she whom I left comparatively cheerful, and certainly in the possession of all her senses—that is all, nothing more," said Marian, in a hard low voice, and with a dead-white face and dried bloodless lips. "I thought," she continued, turning to the girls, "that I might have left her safely in your charge. I never asked for your sympathy, God knows; I would not have had it if you had offered it to me; but I thought you seemed to be disposed kindly and affectionately towards her. There was so much gush and display in your attachment, I might have known it had no real foundation."

"You have no right to speak to us in this way, Mrs. Creswell!" cried Maud, making a step in advance and standing very stiff and erect; "you have no right to——"

"Maud," broke in Mr. Creswell, in his coldest tone, "recollect to whom you are speaking, if you please."

"I do recollect, uncle; I am speaking to Mrs. Ashurst's daughter—dear Mrs. Ashurst, whom both Gertrude and I love, and have tried to show we love her, as she would tell you, if she could, poor darling! And it is only because Mrs. Creswell is her daughter that I answer her at all, after her speaking to me in that way. I will tell you now, Mrs. Creswell, what I should not otherwise have mentioned, that Gerty and I have been constant in our attendance on Mrs. Ashurst, and that one or other of us has always slept in the next room, to be within call if we were wanted, and——"

"Why did you take upon yourselves to keep me in ignorance of the change in my mother's mental state, of this fearful wandering and unconsciousness?—that is what I complain of."

"Oh, I must not let them say they took it upon themselves at all," said Dr. Osborne, who had been looking on uncomfortably during this dialogue; "that was my fault entirely; the girls wanted to send for you, but I said no, much better not. I knew you were due home in a few days, and your earlier arrival could not have done the least good to my poor old friend upstairs, and would only have been distressing to you."

"Oh, you accept the responsibility, Dr. Osborne?" said Marian, still in the same hard voice. "Would you have acted in the same way with any ordinary patient, any stranger?"

"Eh?" exclaimed the little doctor, in a very loud key, rubbing his face hard with his pocket-handkerchief. "What do you ask, Marian?—any stranger?"

"Would you have taken upon yourself to keep a daughter from her mother under similar circumstances, supposing they had been strangers to you?"

"No—no, perhaps not," said the little doctor, still wildly astonished.

"It will be perhaps better, then, if henceforth you put us on the footing of strangers!" said Marian.

"Marian!" exclaimed Mr. Creswell.

"I mean what I said," she replied. "Had we been on that footing now, I should have been at my mother's bedside some days since!" And she walked quickly from the room.

Dr. Osborne made two steps towards his hat, seized it, clapped it on his head, and with remarkably unsteady legs was making his way to the door when Mr. Creswell took him by the arm, begged him not to think of what had just passed, but to remember the shock which Marian had received, the suddenness with which this new phase of her mother's illness had come upon her, &c. The little doctor did not leave the room, as apparently he had intended at first; he sat down on a chair close by, muttering, "Treat her as a stranger! rocked her on my knee! brought her through measles! father died in my arms! treat her as a stranger!"

Two days afterwards Marian stood by the bed on which lay Mrs. Ashurst, dead. As she reverently arranged the grey hair under the close cap, and kissed the cold lips, she said, "You did not enjoy the money very long, darling mother! But you died in comfort at any rate! and that was worth the sacrifice—if sacrifice it were!"

MORE OF WILLS AND WILL MAKING.

THE COCLOUGH BATTLE. IN TWO PARTS.

PART II.

AT last, as the war grew hotter, Mrs. Coclough carried her husband away out of the country to Cheltenham. Boteler House, where they now lived, became a sort of genteel prison—no one was admitted without giving the countersign, as it were. "She directed the avenue gates to be locked," said the relations—a custom they might be reminded that obtains a good deal. Servants were directed not to admit any one to see him without summoning her. Sometimes she made him do the housemaid's

work; sometimes she sent him to the kitchen on menial errands, when he would address the servants there assembled in such a speech as this: "My wife, Jane, desires me to count the pots and pans, as you are all robbing us!" and, said the inflamed relations in a passionate protest against such treatment of their dear friend and patron, "It would appear from his manner and expressions on such occasions, that he acted as a mere instrument in the hands of a *domineering* and tyrannical woman; awed and used by her as she felt necessary, for accomplishing her design of totally depriving him of free agency of thought and independent action." If the poor man gave an order, she countermanded it, telling them to do as *she* told them. Once more, "her frequent and familiar expression" was, "by God it shall be so, and by God it shant be so"—and he was seen trembling before her. A sympathising builder said he seemed "as a child under a parent."

The instructions and "general orders" of those who managed the case are highly characteristic, and give an idea of the strategy by which great cases are carried. A gentleman with a "J.P." and "D.L.," hanging like decorations at the end of his name, was specially recommended to the judicious handling of counsel. "Mr. ——'s description of the complete subjugation of testator to the domineering will of his wife, *is inimitable*. His cowardice in her presence cannot be *expressed in its true light*, except by the production of Mr. —— on the witness table." But they bewailed the fact that he was suffering from "a *personal* and inconvenient complaint," which would prevent his attendance. This distinction of a "*personal* complaint" is rather good; and the writer may have been nearly related to another solicitor, who, when places of resort were being compared, protested that, as to natural charms of scenery, &c., "he gave his veto"—pronounced "vaito"—"for Switzerland." This witness was able to report conversations dramatically, and the House of Lords must have had great amusement reading over this odd chronicle:

Mr. Coclough. My dear fellow, what can I do? My wife says she won't remain; she will leave me.

Mr. ——. It is not to be expected she would remain in a rat-hole like this. You must build a proper house and make it comfortable, and then she will remain.

Mr. C. Why, my dear friend, I told her I would expend ten thousand pounds on a house if she would consent to live with me in it; but she would not on any terms. What am I to do?

Mr. ——. Never mind that. Build the house first, make the house suitable, and, having done your duty, *you* will know how to insist quietly that your wife shall do *hers*.

Mr. C. My motto is, "*Peace before Prosperity.*"

At this point Mrs. Coclough entered the room unexpectedly. The husband at once repeated the good advice he had received.

Mrs. C. Mr. ——! Mr. ——! what can my husband do by residing with his tenantry? What good can he do? What good can he do?

She went over this question many times. Mr. Coclough was then prudently withdrawing, when she turned on him. "Mr. Coclough! Mr. Coclough! what good can you do?—what can you do?" &c. Mr. Coclough made her the next retort, that *she* might do good by letting him remain. But Mr. —— stated that "he then *withdrew as quickly as possible*." When Mr. —— was living in London as a bachelor, his old friend often came to see him, but never was permitted to go up-stairs without his wife.

At last it came to the year 1842, when the testator began to fail, and there seemed a chance that all his wife's schemes—if schemes they were—were to be crowned with success. He was busy with his chemicals and experiments when he felt sick. On the 4th of August the will-making began, perhaps the most unique series of these documents yet known. On that day it was settled that the wife should have the handsome jointure of five thousand a year, while the estates were to go to his heir-at-law. This document was put by carelessly in an open wardrobe. Then a doctor, acting, perhaps, in the interests of the future widow, suggested that the Cheltenham mansion, Boteler House, might be advantageously bequeathed to her. And on the next day, August 4, will number two was prepared and duly signed, in which the alteration was made.

Now came the most sudden change. Early the following morning the same solicitor was sent for. The night before, as the signature was affixed, it was remembered that he said to the solicitor that his wife was to have no more than her annuity. Perhaps some of her allies reported this speech to her; however this was, some bold course of action, some prompt coup de main, reversed all. The night before, the needy relations were secured a fine estate; the next morning, when the solicitor returned, the testator walked into the room and announced that he had made up his mind to leave everything to his wife. It was accordingly so done. Three weeks later he died. The lady kept strict guard over him lest a fourth will should come into existence, and though witnesses about his bed heard him utter faint wishes that his "own people" were with him, the vigilant lady was at hand to interpret these sounds as some of his old French speeches, and "as a request for his pocket-handkerchief." It was he who made a most dramatic sick-bed complaint "that it was dreadful when two burning pains meet." Finally, he gave up the ghost, and the baffled relatives had to pass through that terrible interval of suspense between the death and the opening of the will. It is far more intense and protracted than the time for the gambler between setting down his money, and the turning of the card. Then they learned the worst, and we may suppose, bowing their heads, uttered certain expressions, not loud, but deep.

The heir-at-law at first seemed to accept his

condition. Meanwhile the triumphant lady entered on her hard-won property.

In four years time she married again; but within a month the new husband had to separate from her, owing, as her opponents were ungallant enough to inform the House of Lords in mixed legal and every-day vernacular, "to the violent and ungovernable temper of the said lady, and her desire and determination to rule the said gentleman in the same manner as she had ruled and governed the said Cæsar Colough"—an unhandsome and needless aggravation. The same legal mind proceeds to relate how "an honourable *but* verbal agreement" was entered into between the separated parties, that he was to be guaranteed from all liability in any possible future litigation—a most characteristic specimen of a solicitor-like view of things, as though in their minds and experience, honour was not usually associated with any matters not in writing. And this theory was certainly fortified by their experience in this case, as they declared, that when her interest required it, the imperious lady tried to cast the whole responsibility on her separated husband.

However, after so long an interval as ten years, the relatives, who had been ingeniously kept from legal proceedings by certain arrangements of the estates, contrived by their clever enemy, determined to take the field. Long lists of counsel were enrolled; all the heavy howitzers and mortars of the Irish and English bars, and the light flying artillery were called out. Then began the usual edifying expenditure of clients' money. The disastrous litigation commenced, and in Hilary Term, 1852, the two great line-of-battle ships, heavily armed, and crowded with men, were successfully towed into the Irish Court of Chancery, and began the battle. The result of this first meeting was a putting off of the matter to another time, and to another tribunal, and an "issue was directed" to a local jury. Some months further on, all was ready again, and down went the howitzers and the artillery, every gun having splendidly "served out" to it handsome special fees, retainers, refreshers, and what not. The imperious lady was present during the whole trial, but quite disdained to appear, or to enter the witness-box. The jury found against her, that the *last* made will was not the "last will," and that it had been obtained by undue influence. This was no victory, but a mere repulse of the advanced guard, and notice was presently served of an application for a new trial. It was set down for hearing, when the counsel were "retained"—but was directed to stand over "until the judge furnished his notes."

Meanwhile the vigilant relatives discovered that the lady's agents were hard at work, tampering with their witnesses, "endeavouring to persuade them that their former evidence was untrue, and urging them to confess the same, which they refused to do," and regular affidavits were sworn to this effect. But at last, after motions, and no doubt consultations, the big vessels were again tugged into the Court of Chancery, about a year after they had been towed out for "the issue," and the Chancellor, having taken three months to brood over the matter, and having heard arguments for seven days, declared that the jury was right, and that he could not disturb their decision. Upon the next day the cause was further heard. An appeal was of course had to the House of Lords, who, after due time, *reversed* the verdict, and ordered a new trial. Here was good news for the profession: new refreshers, consultations, &c.

Meanwhile the untiring lady, exhausting every shape of strategy, had craftily instituted a little suit on English territory: an ejectment as to the house at Cheltenham.

The object of this was by a side wind, as it were, to obtain the prestige of a verdict from an English jury, and thus come over triumphantly, with drums beating and flags flying.

Hitherto everything might seem to have gone well with her. She had the authority of the highest tribunal in the land, and she had what certainly seemed a very good case. For what was more natural, than that a man, who cordially disliked all his relatives, who had fought a duel with one (after which they remained bitter foes—a duel being usually certain to reconcile even the most bitter Irish foes), who conceived that he had been badly and cruelly treated by them, should choose to leave his estates to the woman whom he had married for love, and who was latterly his only friend and companion. To the English jury at Cheltenham her case commended itself most reasonably, and it was noted that Lord Campbell, who tried it, treated her with the most scrupulous politeness, and even indulgence. It seemed a hard case: why should not the affectionate wife receive this testimonial of her husband's regard? Still there was one difficulty which seemed to press on the mind of the judge—the exclusion of the relatives. One of them, Sarsfield, had made his way to the gate, imploring to be allowed in. She explained this perfectly. This person had sent in a letter, which, when read by the dying man, had quite inflamed and excited him, and he had determined him not to admit him. She actually had it there and produced it. The other side made no appearance, and she of course obtained her verdict.

But they had taken the precaution to have a short-hand writer, sitting in a retired corner of the court, who was taking down every word; and when the Irish counsel read what was thus reported about the letter they were bewildered. She had made her case too symmetrical, and they did not forget that at the first trial it had been distinctly proved how Sarsfield Colough came to the gate, had sent up his letter, and how it had been contemptuously sent out to him again, unopened, with threats. What could she have meant, or what letter was it? Whatever was the explanation, she had thus cured the weak portion of her case in the only part that seemed to support the charge of undue influence, and of keeping away his relations from his bedside. To solve this problem keen wits were set to work, wits of solicitors, brain and wisdom of the eloquent lawyer who

is now the Chief Justice of Ireland. It was soon ferreted out. The man who had been turned away from the gate, or his son, applied for assistance to the new but temporary heir, asking for the modest sum of fifteen hundred pounds. The other protested it was out of his power, adding, reasonably enough, that his position was very uncertain; and that another trial might displace him. The other at once went over to the enemy, offering his services, and also placing at her disposal all their papers. Here was the clue. Among those papers she had found this returned and unopened letter, and had turned it to the clever use described. With such a woman, too much care and secrecy could not be observed. Not a whisper was breathed, and further investigations were made with a view to the last struggle.

Meanwhile, acting on the verdict of the Wexford jury, the Irish Chancellor had placed the heir-at-law in possession of the old abbey. It was now, indeed, a "rat-hole," for the dry rot of Chancery had set in. The intrepid widow, frustrated for the moment in her designs on the estate, had swept the house clear of every "stick," as the phrase goes, of furniture. The new owner had to patch here and there, fit up a room or two, and could at best but comfort himself with but a temporary tenancy. He had excellent advisers, skilful counsel, who were working hard; but all felt that here was the fatal blemish in the case. The late Cæsar, *disliked* his relatives; disliked the man whose very daughter was now heir-at-law, having fought a duel with him. What undue influence was there required to get him to leave away his estates from such persons? It was felt that victory would be with her: as the victory would assuredly have been, but for her own over finesse, and a strange incident, that seems to belong to Mr. Harrison Ainsworth. The temporary owner then, with a heavy heart, was cheaply papering up a room or two, when a workman noticed a sort of half open panel, much in shape like the slit of a letter-box. Into this he carelessly thrust his brush to "rack" out the dust accumulations, just as painters are fond of doing. Out dropped a bundle of old papers, which the painter brushed aside, and later pointed out to a servant. The servant brought them to his master, who brought them to the solicitor in the cause, who all but shouted with delight as he showed them to his counsel. The lady, "casting away" every stick of furniture, had forgotten to search this precious receptacle. The solicitor hurried with these priceless papers to London, went to a nameless printer, had them printed, and jealously hidden away, and when the counsel received his brief, it was a surprise to find a clasp-lock and key attached to the book.

Meanwhile the new trial began down at Wexford. It was felt that, even with the great prejudices of the jury against the lady, still her case was almost irresistible. Even if defeated by the Wexford jury, she would have "the Lords" to go to once more. Her leading counsel again put her case forward, restated the reasonableness of her influence, and, above all, the unanswerable argument that this branch of the testator's house could have no claim on him, simply because he detested them, and was never reconciled to them. This, again, seemed to settle the case. The lady herself was produced, boldly and defiantly told her story about the letter, and seemed to convince every one. But she was cross-examined vigorously and with amazing power, by Mr. Whiteside. Amid a tumult of anger, refusal to answer, denial, &c., the truth about the letter was wrung from her. Then came the counsel on the other side, restraining himself up to that time, and never had counsel so exquisite a moment of triumph. If there had, said the other counsel, been relations that he liked, or regarded, the influence would have been improper, and the will should go down. In a deliberate and restrained way, the other counsel had the satisfaction of answering this challenge. One by one, from the locked book, were read, not one, not a dozen, but a whole series of the most affectionate letters, between the two Cæsars, who had fought the duel; they had been reconciled, and no one could listen without being convinced that to the child of the Chief Justice the testator could have had no hostility. The feelings of the counsel on the other side, as this fatal shell burst among them, were too strong for even the well trained dissimulation of lawyers. Over those veteran faces was speedily spreading the most palpable confusion, disappointment, and mortification. Very rapidly the triumphant case broke up, and the lady, who but five minutes before was certain of her ten thousand a year, was glad to accept a compromise of some twenty thousand pounds cash which was lying in the bank.

On these trifling gains the lady retired from the contest, and has since, it is believed, married some foreign gentleman; but such a defeat on the eve of victory must have destroyed all future enjoyment. Thus did a second woman of determination figure as a heroine in a battle for an estate and power. Later on we shall follow the fortunes of a third.

GIPSY GLIMPSES.

The writer, going down to spend last Christmas in one of the midland counties, soon heard that a portion of a true gipsy tribe had encamped in the town, on a spare bit of land usually occupied by travelling circuses and similar troups of performers. They received visitors into their ground at the small charge of threepence each, with the hope of extracting larger sums by coaxing, flattery, or fortune-telling. It was Christmas Eve when we went to see them. It had been the weekly market-day, and the gipsies had made themselves conspicuous in the market by their lavish purchases of the very best and dearest articles in it, and, to the great astonishment of the doubting market-women, by paying indisputably

good gold and silver for them. The ground was a dark and muddy field, surrounded by dingy tents, which had, however, a faint glow about them, as if there were plenty of light within. We approached the nearest with cautious and hesitating steps, noiseless on the soft ground; but a voice immediately saluted us with the invitation, "Come in, ladies. Don't be afraid of the poor gipsies." A smooth, pleasant, fawning voice, with flexible tones in it, such as the voices of uneducated people rarely possess, but which seemed to be the common property of all this tribe. We lifted a flap of the tent, and, stooping low, entered. This was the scene we came upon.

A long, low tent, about twenty feet in length, and not more than seven feet in height, and of the same height and breadth from one end to the other. The frame was made of strong hoops placed pretty closely together, with strengthening girders between; it was well covered with good Scotch blankets, which had once been, the gipsy told me, "as white as the driven snow," but which were now brown and weather-stained. A kind of division was made across the middle of the tent. In the front was a space answering to the kitchen and family sitting-room, the centre of which was occupied by a large convenient brazier, filled with glowing charcoal; this had a circular shake-down of straw, perfectly fresh and clean, surrounding it. The further portion of the tent contained a bed, resting on the ground, but piled high with mattresses, and covered with rugs and blankets of the most brilliant colours, scarlet, amber, and blue; two or three boxes, also covered with gorgeous rugs; a set of china richly painted, and a silver tea service; a parrot in a ludicrous brass cage; a picture or two; and a real Christmas tree, with its ordinary accompaniments of oranges and sweetmeats suspended to its decorated branches. A pretty lamp, which hung from the middle of the low roof, shed a brilliant light upon all; while the charcoal fire made the tent even warmer than was desirable on a mild winter's night. The occupants were two only: a widow and her unmarried daughter, who was a handsome and graceful young woman of seven-and-twenty, expressing a lofty contempt for the men of her tribe, and informing us that she put up and took down their large tent, alone, without their aid. These two possessed, besides their tent, a caravan, and the mother held a licence as travelling hawker. The daughter was sitting cross-legged on the straw, with a very large earthenware bowl before her, where she was mixing the ingredients for their Christmas pudding, which seemed likely to be of incredible proportions for a family of two, as she was stoning three pounds of raisins for it. Both were busy, and evidently not in a mood for fortune-telling, or possibly they did not consider us worthy of any exercise of their powers. Very courteous they were, with a finer sort of dignity in their manner than many an English lady would show under a similar infliction—the visit of perfect strangers at a domestic crisis. Two little girls came flying into the tent, with new scarlet frieze frocks in their hands, fresh from the fingers of the dressmaker, and trimmed with black velvet and bugles, which were to be worn for the first time on Christmas Day. I spoke to the old gipsy, of Epping Forest, and she told me, with a touch of poetry in the words, that her daughter was "a real forest bird," having been born in "Grandmother's parlour:" a spot of the old forest now enclosed and built upon. It was easy to trace the same poetic vein in most of them. I told one young mother, with a child in her arms, how we called a little girl belonging to us, Daisy, because she was born when the daisies were springing; her bright black eyes glistened and grew softer as she said it was like her own self, she called her little Oscar "Bee," for when he was a baby, the humming-bees used to fly in and out of her tent, and help to sing him to sleep.

We were asked to visit two or three other tents. One especially, which was even larger and richer than the first, belonging to a married daughter of the old gipsy. The husband was away, and the young woman was sitting alone; she was dressed in an elegant light print dress, and wore gold earrings four inches long, dropping to her shoulders. Amidst the bright-coloured rugs behind her, and upon a pillow as white as snow, lay the curly black head of a little child, sleeping soundly under the full glare of the lamp. She was languidly shredding herbs for the stuffing of a turkey for the morrow's dinner. A large pan was boiling over the charcoal fire, with that placid, equable, gentle bubble, which must give indescribable satisfaction and peace to the heart of a cook; while a delicious savour diffused itself, not too obtrusively, throughout the tent. A large tray of china plates and dishes stood in the background. The whole interior was a picture of extreme comfort, blended with an air of luxury and romance. The rich crimsons, purples, and ambers, of the colouring; the mother's beauty and languid grace; the half hidden face upon the pillow, rosy with sleep; the smokeless fire, with its little bubbling accompaniment of cheery music; these made us linger, till the flap of the tent was gently stirred, and two rough maids-of-all-work entered, who had stolen a few minutes from their lawful business of doing errands, to snatch the brief delight of paying to have their fortunes told.

Of course, we went away, and went with the most innocent and honourable intentions; but finding the ground too muddy in the direction we took, we retraced our steps past the tent, and observed two or three minute peep-holes, which proved irresistibly tempting. The young gipsy woman, with her fine air of superiority, was keeping her seat, while one of the rough-looking girls knelt before her, stammering out an apology for her hand not being over clean.

"Never mind, child," said the gipsy, while she read it closely for a minute or two. "You've a high spirit."

"That's true enough," murmured the girl.

"You may be led, but you won't be drove," she continued.

"True," assented the girl.

"You've lost friends by slander."

"That's as true as I'm here to night!" said the girl, with a look ten times more solemn than if she had been in church.

"Your fortune will be rose by marriage, not by service. There's a J. and a W. thinking about you; which do you prefer?"

The girl simpered, but did not answer rashly; it was a very momentous question.

"I think," she said, bashfully, "I should prefer the J."

"I was just going to tell you," said the fortune-teller, "that there's a ring bought and paid for, as you know nothing about. You'll be a married woman in six months, and have three children, if you mind what you're about."

The girl's face grew radiant with delight, and she rapturously exclaimed to her companion, "It's every word true, Mary." Mary had been to get change, two sixpences for a shilling, and had just brushed past us, too intent and too impatient to pay any regard to our eaves-dropping. She now entered in her turn, with the same shame-facedness concerning her rough hands. But a dog inside the tent, that had been snarling all the time at our unwarrantable conduct, becoming more uneasy, we decided it was time to go; so we left the field, and the dim tents dotted about it, and returned to the house at which we were visiting, whose occupant had passed sixty long years beneath the same roof-tree; a strange contrast to the vagrant tribe, possessing an abiding place nowhere.

The same striking contrast was presented to us still more forcibly a few days later, when we were invited to spend an evening with the gipsies in the oldest of all the residences in the neighbourhood:—a pile of irregular buildings, set up at different times, with ivied gables, and lattice windows here and there, bearing the name of the Old Hall. It has been a homestead and dwelling-place through many generations, and its thick walls had sheltered a countless succession of guests, before the gipsies were welcomed within its broad, low doorways. It was known that they had received a somewhat similar invitation elsewhere, but that they had been deeply affronted by being gathered into a public room, and mixed up, as they said, with quite a low class of people, and where they had had their tea served to them in delft cups, and with leaden spoons. Their host upon this occasion had assured them that they should meet none but his personal friends, and should be treated as any other of his visitors. He was thoroughly anxious to gratify their feelings, and minister to their æsthetic tastes. The dining-hall—a handsome room, large enough to seat fifty or sixty guests, and with walls painted of a deep rich red—was decorated with evergreens and pictures, and brilliantly lighted up. The tables were adorned with plate, and china, and flowers, but with a more profuse display of provisions than usual; needless as it proved. Some misgiving being felt as to whether they might fail us at the last moment, a servant was sent down to the camp to ascertain the *feeling* of the gipsies. They were found regaling themselves with tea, and bread and meat; and when expostulated with, they gave the superb reply, "We must not be hungry when we are visiting. We cannot fill ourselves at the Doctor's expense."

They arrived at the Doctor's about half an hour after the appointed time, as if they had the fashionable dread of appearing too eager to accept the hospitality offered to them. The men were a band of strong healthy-looking fellows, mostly dressed like homely country farmers; but with very little of the awkwardness and bashfulness of the lower farmer class. The women retained a more picturesque style of apparel, except in the instance of my unmarried friend of twenty-seven, who was attired in a mauve moiré antique gown, with a very long train, a Paisley shawl, and a lace bonnet with flowers in it. The rest of the women were less magnificent, and more gipsy-like; but several of them apologised for their dress, saying that they had never thought they would be treated like real gentlefolks. We mingled with them as much as possible at the tea-table, but the gipsy men kept apart at one end of the room, with a little native wildness in their behaviour. As might have been expected, their appetite was somewhat dull, but they could not resist the temptation of hot buttered cakes. The first who made the discovery of these dainties proclaimed it in a loud voice to some friend at a distance; but that was the sole breach of etiquette which came under my notice. In general they conducted themselves with as much ease and self-possession as if they were accustomed to occupy chairs and tables at every meal; one little boy alone asking to be put down upon the floor to rest his legs. Opposite to me at the tea-table, sat two young women, with low broad intelligent foreheads, black eyes, very brilliant, but with no softness or depth in them, and purplish black hair falling carelessly about the neck and face. Their hands, like those of most of the other women, were small and well-shaped, with long, taper fingers laden with rings, and bearing little trace of rough work. I counted eleven rings on the hand of the girl opposite me; and upon another occasion I asked her to let me look at them. She was then en deshabille in her tent, kneeling at a washing-tub, but she willingly took off a yellow silk handkerchief which covered her neck, and handed it to me with all her jewelry tied in a tight knot at one corner, which had been hidden in her bosom. They were of less value than I had fancied, five of them being memorial rings only.

When tea was over the Doctor had some religious addresses administered to his strange guests, and the gipsies with an honourable exception or two, then looked as if they thought it was time to go home. But as soon as this duty was performed the Doctor, whose desire

it was to make the evening thoroughly enjoyable to them, invited them to adjourn to the drawing-room. Then began the real pleasure of the party. The gipsies were taken by surprise; but while the men held back a little, the women and children thronged, with childish delight and curiosity, into the drawing-room.

It was a large low room, such as are to be found in ancient houses only, wainscotted from floor to roof with polished panels of oak, dark with age, which formed an excellent background for throwing out the warm colouring of the gipsy groups. Pictures, mostly fair, sunny, and lightsome, and mirrors in glistening frames, hung against the walls. There were flowers about, and cases of butterflies; and there were couches, ottomans, and chairs of light gay colours. We left these seats to the gipsies, and it was marvellous with what complete dignity and elegance they occupied them. The only trace that they were not "to the manner born," was that one young girl, of fifteen or so, slipped down after a while from her sofa to a more familiar posture on the floor. They amused themselves with the albums, knick-knacks, old china, books of pictures, solitaire-boards, and other ornaments of the room, with a very close resemblance to the composure and collectedness of those accustomed to such things all their life. During the early part of the evening they had exchanged remarks with one another very freely in Romany, which was, of course, incomprehensible to us; but upon finding themselves drawing-room guests, they put on an additional politeness of bearing. I heard only one sentence spoken in Romany, which was plainly a sharp rebuke, administered by an elderly woman to a girl who was laughing and talking somewhat too loudly.

The men were not one whit behind the women in good breeding and courtesy. Those who ventured into the drawing-room would rise to offer their seat to a lady whom they might see standing, just as any other gentlemen would. One of them conversed fluently with a lady at the piano concerning the different operas, and asked for airs from La Sonnambula and La Zingara. "Look at Annie with that gipsy fellow!" said Annie's husband. It was a droll sight. The gipsy, a dark sunburnt man, was leaning over her with bent head, his hand upon the music-board, ready to turn the leaves, while she was looking up into his face, smiling and talking as to any other gentleman. He tried his skill when she rose from the piano, and said, regretfully, that their wandering life was altogether inconsistent with pianos.

But most of the men kept in the dining-room, and the large entrance-hall, which contained many fine plants, mosses, and ferns. They specially admired the brilliant scarlet of the poynsittia pulcherrima, and asked to have the name written down for them, in order that the next child born in the camp might be called after it! They were also much interested in an antique cumbersome suit of armour; but they considered it fair manners to talk Romany in the hall, and did not make any observation upon it in English.

One little living picture will always stay in my memory. A young gipsy mother, with the true Zingara beauty of face, a low olive-tinted forehead, straight eyebrows, glittering eyes, and black hair, with the metallic lustre of a raven's wing upon it. Her dress, a kind of vest of a creamy white, with a skirt of pure simple primary red, neither scarlet nor crimson, of some soft stuff which showed something of the roundness and grace of her limbs. A pair of long earrings fell beside her dusky neck. She had small tawny hands covered with rings. And upon her lap, with its shrewd, small, fortune-telling face lying on her bosom, and its bead-like eyes with very little look of babyhood in them, nestled a child only seven months old, lightly caressed by her bare arm. She was leaning back against the dark panelling, weary with sitting upright so long, but in an attitude of wonderful grace and freedom, while the light of the fire beside her, played about her and her baby.

The most intelligent of the gipsies was a man with the rather unromantic name of Smith. He told me there was scarcely one among them who could read or write. Most of the people in their tribe were related in and out. They belonged to the true gipsy race; not to the gipsies of Epping Forest, who were a mongrel lot, from whom they had been obliged to separate, on account of their low and dirty habits. Only one man in their camp had mixed blood, and the taint had come in so long ago that nobody knew whence it came. The real gipsies were to be known as much by their customs and traditions as by their genealogy. If a dog should lick any plate or vessel, even a brass or copper pan, it was immediately destroyed, or disposed of; no true gipsy would use it again. They called themselves protestants of the Church of England, and were christened, married, and buried, at the church nearest to which their camp happened to be. "It was almost an unheard-of thing," he said, "for a real gipsy to marry a person of another race; but such things might become more common by and by."

This man was a pleasant, straightforward-looking, fair man, with nothing of the gipsy caste of face. His voice was steady and grave, and his manner exceedingly self-respectful. He had three children with him, over whom he kept a strict, but kindly oversight. His wife was at home, taking care of the tent, he said. When it was time for the party to disperse, Smith made a farewell speech to the Doctor, spoken with much dignity and courtesy, assuring him that his people had never spent an evening with so much enjoyment. They took their departure with no awkward hurry or rush, leaving us with the impression that while entertaining gipsies, we had been entertaining gentlepeople unawares.

It is but fair to add that the trust reposed in them was not betrayed. Of the many little articles of value, which lay about

the Old Hall, ready to pilfering fingers, not one was missed. Our gipsy guests had been strictly honest.

LYRICAL INTERLUDES.

THE QUID PRO QUO.

I HEARD you ask in a whisper light,
Who that ugly old woman might be?
Turning your eyes (they are not very bright)
With a leer and a sneer at me.

Good Sir! This ugly old woman
Was once a pretty girl;
'Twas about the time your whiskers grew,
And your beard began to curl.

I was the handsomer of the two,
Though sooner laid on the shelf;—
Good Sir! ere you mock at others,
'Twould be well to look at yourself!

An ugly old woman! you said, Sir?
A hideous old man! say I.
Padded, bewigged, without a tooth;
Neither fit to live, nor to die!

THE TRANSFORMATION.

I thought my love an angel once,
And in her love did revel,
I think her now—I'll not be harsh—
Something that rhymes to—*revel*.

A ROYAL GRIEVANCE.

Once, in a dream, I was a king,
Rich, powerful, and adored;
Wise in the council, gay in hall,
And mighty with the sword.
But like all other kings and men,
Though greatly I enjoyed,
My bliss was other than I'd have,
And mournfully alloyed.

My bowl contained a poisonous drop;
A skeleton, my shelf;
For I should cease to be a king,
The day I scratched myself!
Such was the harsh decree of Fate;—
And harder still my thrall,
For if I scratched by deputy,
Worse mischief would befall!

Oh! how I suffered, how I longed,
No mortal tongue can tell;
'Twas past endurance, past my strength,
And drove me to rebel!
"Who?" I exclaimed, "would be a king,
With penalty like this?
Not I!" said I, and scratched myself,
And wakened into bliss!

THE AZTEC RUINS OF NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA.

I MUST now say a few words about the ruins which are to be found scattered throughout New Mexico, Arizona, and Northern Mexico. There is scarcely a valley in the Rio Grande basin in which the stone or adobe foundations of villages are not to be found; there is scarcely a spring, a laguna, or a marsh upon the plateau which is not overlooked by some ruined fortress. Usually these relics crest a commanding eminence, not always in close proximity either to the fertile land which supported the community, or even to the spring which supplied them with water. If a stream runs near them, the remains of acequias, or irrigating canals, are generally to be found. There are many places, however, where cultivation was successfully carried on without them, the rainfall alone being relied upon, while some ruins show signs of reservoirs and terraces similar to those still in use amongst the Moquis.

The ruins may be classed under three heads:

First. Ruins of many-storied Indian strongholds.

Second. Ruins of buildings evidently constructed under Spanish rule.

Third. Ruins, the foundations of which alone remain.

East of the Rio Grande, there are at least four ruined towers of the first order deserving of special notice; these are the ruins of Pecos, Quarra, Gran Quivera, and Abo; all, however, contain ruins of Spanish as well as Indian origin.

The early Spaniards tell us that Pecos was a fortified tower of several stories. It was built upon the summit of a mesa, which juts out into the valley of the stream of the same name, and overlooks the low lands for many miles in both directions.

The only conspicuous buildings amongst the ruins are the Spanish church and the Mexican temple. For probably a century the two religions flourished side by side; the incense ascended from the altar of the one, and the fire of Montezuma burned day and night in the estufa of the other. The church is a cruciform adobe structure, the greater part of the walls of which are still standing. Montezuma's church is much more decayed; it shows signs of having been at least three stories in height, and in the centre the large circular estufa is quite perfect.

The pueblo was called by the early Spaniards Tiguex, and was the chief town of a district called by the same name. According to Indian tradition, it was built by Montezuma himself on his way southward from Toas; he placed his sacred fire in the estufa, and warned his people that death would come upon them if they allowed it to go out. Before leaving them, he took a tall tree and planted it in an inverted position, saying that when he should disappear a foreign race would rule over his people, and there would be no rain. "They were not to lose heart, however, under the foreign

yoke, nor to let the fire burn out in the estufa; for when the time came in when the tree should fall, men with pale faces would pour into the land from the east and overthrow their oppressors, and he himself would return to build up his kingdom; the earth would again become fertile, and the mountains yield abundance of silver and gold. Then Montezuma departed and travelled southward, spreading pueblos far and wide, until he reached the city of Mexico, where he lived until the enemy, in the form of the Spaniards, arrived, when he disappeared." The pueblo Indians say that Montezuma's prophecy has been literally fulfilled. Soon after Montezuma returned to the Great Spirit, the enemy, in the form of Spaniards, came, conquered, and enslaved them. Although they could not shake off the oppressors, still they kept the holy fire burning, and tried to dwell in peace with all men. The Spaniards added many buildings to the town, and lived there amongst them until about the middle of the last century, when the wild Indians of the mountains attacked and desolated Pecos, driving away and murdering its inhabitants. Nevertheless, amidst the havoc and plunder of the place, a faithful few amongst the Indians managed to keep the fire burning in the estufa, until at last the deliverers, with "pale faces, poured in from the east," and the tree at Pecos fell to the ground as the American army entered Santa Fé. Then the remnant of the tribe, which in 1808 only numbered one hundred and thirty-five souls, left the ruined fortress, and brought the sacred fire with them to the pueblo of Jemez, to which place their companions had migrated years before. Here they were kindly received by the Indians of that pueblo, who helped them to build acequias and houses, and to sow and gather in their crops; droughts no longer desolated the land, but copious showers still bring wealth and happiness to the chosen people of the great prince.

The ruins of Quarra consist, like those of Pecos, of a church, a large Aztec building, now a heap of stones and rubbish, and numerous foundations of smaller houses, probably of Spanish or Mexican origin. The church is built of red sandstone, in the form of a cross; the length of nave and chancel is a hundred and forty feet, that of the transept is fifty feet; the widths respectively are thirty-three to eighteen feet; the walls are two feet thick and sixty feet high.

At Abo there is also a ruined church, cruciform in shape, the arms being respectively twenty-seven and a hundred and twenty-nine feet; it is built of small, beautifully cut stones, placed together with the utmost nicety. Other extensive ruins are scattered around it.

At Gran Quivera, there are extensive ruins of Spanish buildings, having the arms of different families; but there are other ruins, undoubtedly of Indian origin, which fully carry out the statement of the historian Venegas and others, that this ancient pueblo was a large fortress, consisting of seven terraces, rising in steps one from the other. The remains of large acequias are to be seen in the vicinity both of Gran Quivera and Quarra. So much for the ruins of the Rio Grande basins.

There are not, to my knowledge, any ruined pueblos as far north as the main valley of the Rio San Juan, but there are several upon its two most southern tributaries, the Rio de Chelly and the Cañon de Chaco. The most remarkable are the Pueblos Pintado, Una Vida, Wegegi, Hungo Pavie, and Bonito—all on the latter stream. Besides these, there are five others in a more ruined state. The Pueblo Pintado has three stories, its whole elevation being about thirty feet. The walls are built of small flat slabs of grey, fine-grained sandstone, two inches and a half thick, and are put together with much art and ingenuity by means of a kind of mortar made without lime. At a distance they have the appearance of mosaic work. The thickness of the outer wall of the first story is one yard at the base, diminishing at each successive story, until the top wall scarcely exceeds one foot. There are, as usual, no external openings in the ground floor. The length of the edifice is three hundred and ninety feet; the ground floor contains fifty-three rooms, which open into each other by means of very small doors, in many instances only thirty-three inches square. The floors are made of rough beams, over which cross-beams are laid, and above all is a coating of bark and brushwood covered over with mortar. The wood appears to have been cut with some blunt instrument.

The ruins of Wegegi are similar to those of Pintado, being six hundred and ninety feet in length, and having ninety-nine rooms on the ground floor. The Pueblo Una Vida is no less than nine hundred and eighty-four feet long, and the Pueblo Bonito is still more extensive. The estufa of the latter is very large, and in a fair state of preservation; it is a hundred and eighty feet in circumference, and the walls are regularly

formed of alternate layers of small and large stones, held together with mortar.

Another pueblo, Chetho Kette, measures thirteen hundred feet in circumference, and was originally four stories high. It has the remains of a hundred and twenty-four rooms on the first story.

The most perfect of the ten ruined pueblos discovered by Lieut. Simpson, in the Cañon de Chaco, is that of Hungo Pavie (or the Crooked Nose). Its circumference, including the enclosed court, is eight hundred and seventy-two feet; it faces, as usual, the cardinal points, and contains one estufa, placed in the northern wing of the building.

One or more estufas have been discovered in each pueblo. Some are rectangular; others circular. There are similar ruins in the Valle de Chelly. The Navajo Indians, in whose country these pueblos are situated, say that they were built by Montezuma and his people, at the time of their emigration from north to south, and shortly before their dispersion on the banks of the Rio Grande, and over other parts of Mexico.

The country occupying the fork between the Great Colorado and the Colorado Chiquito forms a part of that vast table-land, the Colorado plateau, through which both these streams pass in deep cañons.

The land is cut up into lofty mesas of variable size, and is very arid and worthless. The seven Moqui villages crest the edges of some of the mesas which form the south-eastern encampment of the Colorado plateau. Further to the north-west, and nearer the Colorado, there is another group of pueblos in ruins, larger than those of the Moqui Indians, but situated, like them, on the flat summits of mesas, containing estufas, reservoirs, terraces, aqueducts, and walls of at least four stories high. No trace has as yet been found of their former inhabitants.

Next we come to the ruins on the Colorado Chiquito and its southern tributaries. There are ruins upon El Moro, ruins north of Zuñi, old Zuñi, and others along the Zuñi river; ruins also on the Rio Puerco of the west, amongst which our parties found abundance of pottery; and there are most extensive ruins in the main valley, both above the falls and between the falls, and the entrance of the cañon of the Chiquito, scattered along a fertile basin of at least a hundred miles in length. At Pueblo Creek, the remains of several fortified pueblos were found, crowning the heights which command Aztec Pass; but west of this point (longitude one hundred and thirteen degrees west), no other ruins have as yet been discovered.

Leaving the basin of the Colorado Chiquito, we pass southward to that of the Rio Gila, where the most extensive ruins of all are to be found. Some fine streams enter this river on the north, draining a country very little known, but of great interest, and containing many fertile valleys. The chief of these tributaries are the Rios Preito, Bonito, San Carlos, Salinas, and Rio Verde, which latter two unite before joining the Gila, twelve miles from the Pima villages, and lastly, the Agua Fia. The great New Mexican guide Lerou, started northward from the Pima villages in May, 1854, crossed over to the junction of the Salinas with the Rio Verde (also called Rio de San Francisco), ascended the latter stream, and crossed from it to the thirty-fifth parallel route along the Colorado Chiquito. He represents the Rio Verde as a fine large stream; in some cases rapid and deep, in others, spreading out into wide lagoons.

The ascent was by gradual steppes, stretching out on either side into plains which abounded in timber — pine, oak, ash, walnut, sycamore, and cotton-wood. The river banks were covered with ruins of stone houses and regular fortifications. They were built on the most fertile tracts of the valley, where were signs of acequias and of cultivation. The walls were of solid masonry, of rectangular form, some twenty or thirty paces in length, and from ten to fifteen feet in height. They were usually of two stories, with small apertures or loop-holes for defence when besieged, and reminded him strongly of the Moqui pueblos. At one place he encountered a well-built fortified town, ten miles distant from the nearest water.

Other travellers report many ruined pueblos along the Salinas, others on the San Carlos, and several very extensive ones in the fertile Tonto basin, which is drained by a tributary of the Salinas. Of many of the ruins on the Gila itself, and in the valleys of its southern tributaries, I can speak from personal knowledge. A little west of the northern extremity of the Burro mountains, the Rio Gila leaves the Santa Rita, and other ranges, and meanders for a distance of from seventy to a hundred miles through an open valley of considerable width. This long strip of fertile land is studded throughout with deserted pueblos, which at the present time belong almost entirely to the third class—viz., those of which the foundations

alone mark the localities. It is impossible to travel more than a mile or two along the margin of the lowlands without encountering them, and one of our guides, who knew the ground well, told me that at least one hundred thousand people must at one time have occupied this valley. The ruins follow the river quite to the mouth of the first cañon by which the Gila cuts through the Pina-leña mountains. In the cañada of the Aravaypa, on the western side of this range, I examined the ruins of two pueblos, one being a fortification covering the top of a steep hill which guarded the entrance to the Aravaypa cañon. All along the San Pedro valley, through which Mr. Runk's party travelled for one hundred and sixty miles, ruined pueblos were frequently met with. Amongst them the remains of pottery, such as is in general use among the town Indians and Mexicans, were picked up in great abundance. Remains of acequias also were very numerous. Between Camp Grant, where I left my party to enter Old Mexico and the Pima villages, the mesas bordering on the Gila are pretty thickly studded with ruins, but further west than the confluence of the Rio Verde no more traces of pueblos are to be found.

Two good-sized ruins are situated near the Pima villages; one is known as Casa Montezuma, the other as Casa Grande. Casa Montezuma, also called Casa Blanca, consists of the remains of four large houses, one of which is tolerably perfect as a ruin. Around it are piles of earth, showing where others had been, and although ten miles distant from the river, all the intervening space is intersected by acequias, and was no doubt once under cultivation. The chief ruin is four stories high, and forty feet by fifty wide; the walls face the cardinal points, and have four estufas four feet by two in size. The rafters inside had been almost entirely destroyed by fire, but as far as could be seen, they were very roughly hewn. The walls were built of brick, mortar, and pebbles, and were smoothed without and plastered within. The arrangements of the rooms, the presence of doors, and the absence of terraces, would lead one not to attribute this building to Aztec origin.

Casa Grande is situated a little below the junction of the Rio Verde and the Salinas; it is a rectangular ruin, two hundred and twenty feet by sixty-eight, whose sides face the cardinal points. The highest walls are, as usual, to be found in the centre of the pile, and they appear to have been three or four stories high.

Besides abundance of broken pottery, are found sea-shells, often pierced, and otherwise converted into ornaments, about the ruins which skirt the Gila and neighbouring streams, showing that these people must have had some intercourse with tribes living along the coast. These shells may have been brought by tribes inhabiting the Lower Colorado, across the Sonora desert, to exchange for food, clothing, and other Pima manufactures; but I think it most probable that the kindred race, the Papagos, were the chief vendors of shells, for they are great traders, and wander through all Northern Sonora, from the Gulf of California to the Sierre Madre, and even now supply the scanty population of this region with sea-salt obtained from some salt lakes near the coast.

The Pimas themselves state positively, that at one time they were a great and powerful nation, living in houses similar to the ruins found on the Gila; but after the destruction of their kingdom they travelled southward, and settled in the valley, where they now dwell; fearing lest they should again become an object of envy to a future enemy, they were content ever afterwards to live in huts.

Lastly, I would mention one more cluster of ruins, which, although they are south of the boundary line of the United States, belong, without doubt, to the same class as those I have been considering; these are the Casas Grandes and Casa de Janos, situated on the Rio Casas Grandes, which flows northward into the Laguna de Guzman in North-western Chihuahua. The former, according to the historian Clavegero, is similar in every respect to the ruined fortresses of New Mexico, consisting of three floors, with a terrace above them, and without any entrance to the ground floor. The doors led into the buildings on the second floor, so that scaling ladders were necessary. A canal, says Dr. Wislizenus, conveyed water from a spring to this place. A watch-tower, probably Casa Janos, stands two leagues to the south-west of it, commanding a wide extent of country, and along the stream are many mounds, in which have been found earthen vessels, painted white, blue, and violet, weapons of stone, but none of iron. The following particulars are from Bartlett's personal narrative: "The ruins of Casas Grandes face the cardinal points, and consist of fallen and erect walls, the latter varying in height from five to thirty feet, projecting above the heaps of ruins which have crumbled to decay. Were the height esti-

mated from the foundations, it would be much greater, particularly of those of the centre part of the building, where the fallen walls and rubbish form a mound twenty feet above the ground. If, therefore, the highest walls now standing have their foundations on the lowest level, their probable height was from forty to fifty feet. I conclude that the outer portions of the building were the lowest, about one story high, while the central ones, judging from the height of the walls now standing, and the accumulation of rubbish, were probably from three to six stories. Every portion of the building is made of adobe, which differs from that now made by the Mexicans in that the blocks are very much larger, being fourteen or sixteen inches long, twelve wide, and three or four thick; the others are usually twenty-two inches in thickness, and three feet or more in length. Gravel was mixed with these large adobes, which greatly increased their hardness, but no straw was used. The building consists of three masses, united by walls of probably only one story, forming perhaps only court yards; they are now weather-beaten down to long lines of mounds.

"The entire edifice extends from north to south eight hundred feet, from east to west two hundred and fifty. The general character is very similar to Casas Grandes, near the Pima villages, and the ruins on the Salinas. Not a fragment of wood remains; many doorways are to be seen, but the lintels have gone, and the top has in most cases crumbled away and fallen in.

"Some of the apartments arranged along the main walls are twenty feet by ten, and connected by doorways, with a small enclosure or pen in one corner, between three and four feet high. Besides these, there are many other exceedingly narrow apartments, too contracted for dwelling-places or sleeping-rooms, with connecting doorways, and into which the light was admitted by circular apertures in the upper part of the wall. There are also large halls, and some enclosures within the walls are so extensive that they could never have been covered with a roof. The lesser ranges of buildings which surrounded the principal one may have been occupied by the people at large, whose property was deposited within the great building for safe keeping. Although there appears to be less order in the tout ensemble of this great collection of buildings than in those further north, the number of small apartments, the several stages or stories, the inner courts, and some of the minor details, resemble in many respects the large edifices of the semi-civilised Indians of New Mexico."

The builders showed much sagacity in their choice of so fine a region for agricultural purposes. There is none equal to it from the lowlands of Texas, near San Antonio, to the fertile valleys of California, near Los Angelos, and, with the exception of the Rio Grande, there is not one valley equal in size to that of the Casas Grandes, between those of Eastern Texas and the Colorado of the West. The water of the Rio Casas Grandes, unlike that of the Rio Grande, Pecos, and Colorado, is clear, sweet, and sparkling.

Not more than a hundred yards distant is another ruin, about fifteen feet square. Garcia Conde says that these edifices were known to have had three stories and a roof, with steps outside, probably of wood. Healos repeats the story of the Aztec emigration, and states that this was the third stopping-place of that people on their way from the north to the valley of Mexico.

I met with no Indian ruins in Sonora, nor have I heard of any other similar ones either there or in Chihuahua.'

THE TUDOR SLIP-KNOT.

It was not delicate of Henry the Eighth to call a lady whom he had induced to cross the sea, and marry him, a Flanders mare. Old Harry must have had experience in love-making before he made an offer of his hand to Anne of Cleves; yet he mismanaged, as his father's son should not have done. For when Henry the Seventh thought of taking a wife, whom he had not seen, he went about the business systematically. He sent envoys to Spain, where the young queen of Naples lived, instructed them to get an audience of her, and make full report to him, upon her skin, her hair, her eyes, her nose, her teeth, her lips, her hands, her fingers, and her breast. They were to get hold of her slippers, that they might judge of her real height, and see "the fashion of her foot." They were to make inquiries about her general health and diet. They were also instructed to come as near her in conversation as etiquette would permit, in order to feel if her breath were sweet.

Delicacy was not a Tudor virtue, when wives were in question. Of Henry the Eighth and his six wives I say only let them rest in peace. But King Henry's playful views of marriage were not confined to himself; they belonged equally to his friends and favourites, and tickled his two sisters, whose domestic history contained facts almost as peculiar in their way as any in the life of their more noted brother. Margaret, the elder, was first married to James the Fourth of Scotland, and after that king's death at Flodden, allowed herself to be wooed and won by Archibald, Earl of Angus. This alliance brought her

into no small trouble, from the factiousness of the Scotch nobility. She not only lost the influence she had possessed as queen dowager, but was deprived of the guardianship of her own son, and even for some time forbidden to see him. She was also robbed of her widow's portion, and was left at times in positive distress and penury, in consequence of which she for a while returned to the court of her brother in England. Then she found that the only way to make life tolerable in the country of her adoption was to humour the different parties alternately. Finally she became entirely detached from the interests of her husband, and resolved on getting a divorce from him in order to marry one Henry Stewart, to whom she had taken a fancy. How to set about this, was a question, one might have supposed, of no small difficulty, for all the world had its eyes open, when she married Angus. But when she came to think of it, it occurred to her that her first husband, James the Fourth, had not been killed at Flodden, but must have been alive when she married Angus. Hence she was able to draw the agreeable inference that her marriage with Angus had been bigamy, void from the first. And so, though she had been his wedded wife for fourteen years, she was now free to marry Henry Stewart — and she did. The new alliance, however, was not much happier than the former; for after some years she found that her third husband showed her as little consideration as her second had done, for which reason she obtained a divorce from him also, and died a single woman.

Henry the Eighth's second sister, Mary, was not altogether so unfortunate; but she had troubles enough. Henry gave her in marriage to Louis the Twelfth of France in the full expectation that the aged and sickly king would not live long, and he overcame the young girl's natural objections to a repulsive match, with the assurance that she should be free to marry whom she pleased next time. She had not long to wait for the opportunity, because King Louis died three months after the marriage; but she does not appear to have been quite sure that her brother would keep faith with her. So to make all right, she herself, before she left France, married Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, who was at that time over on an embassy, and to whom she seems to have been attached when she was forced into the French alliance. He was young, brave, and handsome,—in all personal qualities an admirable match for her; but the aristocracy of the day found in this case a grave offence against decency, which they had failed to see in the match with Louis the Twelfth. Suffolk was an upstart. His title of duke was at this time but a year old, and only two years ago he had been plain Charles Brandon. His advancement had been wholly due to the king's favour, and by his impudence in marrying the king's sister the best blood in England was set on to boil.

To do Henry the Eighth justice, he did not suffer his own blood to boil in the same pot with the blood of his nobles. Indeed, it is pretty clear that he sent Suffolk to France with a promise, that he should have Mary to wife on his return; and there is no reason to doubt that it was at least sincerely promised. Mary, however, was sadly afraid that she should be victimised again, and took the matter into her own hands, to the great displeasure of her brother, and to the disgust of all English nobles.

The man, whom she had thus chosen, and made her second husband—what were his attractions? Physically speaking, he was not unlike Henry the Eighth, who, no doubt, was drawn to him by the qualities which they possessed in common. He was like him in having a big, large frame, strong limbs and animal passions, and a liking for rough, manly exercises. But in mental qualities he was much his inferior. With just education enough to write a very bad hand he spelled almost every word in a fashion quite his own, and barely made himself intelligible in letters totally void of grammar. Henry the Eighth, however, had employed him both in war and in diplomacy, and in the year before his marriage with Mary had tried to recommend him as a husband to Margaret of Savoy, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian.

Whether Suffolk himself had produced any serious impression on Margaret is more than doubtful. We have a letter of hers upon the subject to the King of England's ambassador, stating that she had shown the duke a great deal of respect, out of consideration for his master; but that marriage was a thing she could not think of, otherwise she would be dishonoured and looked upon as a fool. Henry the Eighth, indeed, who had just then won the town of Tournay and found time for a little trifling at the end of a busy campaign, had done a portion of the wooing on Suffolk's account, who was probably a clumsy hand at it. "I know well, Madam," said the King, "that my fellow shall be to you a faithful servant, and that he is altogether yours." But she had allowed Suffolk to flirt with her, with no very great reluctance. Afterwards she was annoyed to find the affair commonly talked about, apparently through the idle vanity of Suffolk, who could not keep himself from showing a diamond ring that he had stolen from her finger. Of this boast Margaret seems to have felt that some explanation was necessary, and she gives the following account of it in her letter.

"One night at Tournay," she writes, her letter being translated to us by the ambassador to whom it was addressed, "after the banquet he put himself on his knees before me, and in speaking, and him playing, he drew from my finger the ring, and put it upon his, and since showed it me; and I took to laugh, and to him said that he was a thief, and that I thought not that the King had with him led thieves out of his country. This word *larron* he could not understand; wherefore I was constrained to ask how one said in Flemish *larron*. And afterwards I said to him in Flemish *dieffe*, and I prayed him many times to give it me again, for that it was too much known. But he understood me not well, and kept it on unto the next day that I spake to the King, him requiring to make him to give it me, because it was too much known—I promising him one of my bracelets the which

I wore, the which I gave him. And then he gave me the said ring; the which one other time at Lille, being set nigh to my Lady of Hornes, and he before, upon his knees, it took again from my finger. I spake to the King to have it again; but it was not possible, for he said unto me that he would give me others better, and that I should leave him that. I said unto him that it was not for the value, but for that it was too much known. He would not understand it, and departed from me. The morrow after, he brought me one fair point of diamond, and one table of ruby, and showed me that it was for the other ring. Wherefore I durst no more speak of it, if not to beseech him that it should not be showed to any person; the which hath not all been to me done."

But certainly the most extraordinary fact relating to this Duke of Suffolk is, that he had a wife living at the very time he was thus flirting with Margaret of Savoy, and even when he married Henry the Eighth's sister! If this fact had been known to the enraged King and nobles, it would certainly have justified their indignation. How he managed to escape detection and punishment on this ground is not easily explained; but the fact seems to be proved beyond dispute, as he afterwards obtained a bull from the Pope to legitimise his issue by Mary, and in this document the circumstances of the case are stated.

It seems that he had been first betrothed to a lady named Ann Brown, but before the marriage was complete he obtained a dispensation to marry his aunt, Margaret Mortymer, whom he accordingly did make his wife. Some time afterwards, however, being dissatisfied with the step he had taken, he found out one objection to the marriage in the fact that he and his wife were within the second and third degrees of affinity, and another in the fact that his wife was some way related to his first betrothed. These circumstances, as it was afterwards stated in the bull, weighed upon his conscience and he got the marriage pronounced null by an official; on which he married his first love, Ann Brown, by whom he had a daughter. So much of Browns, Mortimers, Brandons, Louises, Jameses, Archibalds, and Henrys, who illustrate in the lives of Henry the Eighth's two sisters, Margaret and Mary, the free and easy way of wearing the matrimonial tie as a slip-knot, Tudor-fashion.

THE PHANTOM OF REGATTA ISLAND.

"Easy all! ship!" cried the coxswain, and as we laid in our oars, well pleased at the prospect of a rest, our boat ran alongside the landing-place on the island at the end of Henley Reach.

We were rowing down from Oxford by easy stages in a four-oared gig. We had come out for pleasure, and not to perform aquatic feats. We rested whenever we felt disposed, and hailed the sight of a lock with invariable satisfaction. Our boat presented, as I looked down upon her from the bank, an appearance of comfortable untidiness. Carpet bags were stowed away under the seats, a hamper was lashed aft within easy reach of the coxswain, and upon the coxswain's seat reclined a suspicious tankard. Two or three unbusiness-like pipes were on the floor, the usual miserable little sheepskin sitting mats were replaced by thick, comfortable cushions, and our boat herself, a roomy inrigged gig, evidently meant pleasure.

We landed our hamper, unpacked the good things we had that morning brought from Wargrave, and devoted ourselves to our lunch, or rather dinner, with as good an appetite as if we really had been working hard. It was not long before this business was satisfactorily despatched, and we were all reclining on the grass lazily smoking, or feeding to dangerous repletion a brood of yellow ducklings which had gathered about us.

All of us, that is to say, except Will Darton, who had quietly disappeared. Will had been the life and soul of our party hitherto; his laugh had been the gayest, his temper the sweetest, his work, on the rare occasions when we tried a little real rowing, the hardest. But all day, from the moment we decided on taking our lunch with us and on enjoying it in the pure June air on Regatta Island, rather than in a close inn-room, his manner had changed. He had been strangely silent and preoccupied, something seemed to weigh heavily on his thoughts, and when any allusion to our coming resting-place was made, it seemed, in some odd way, to disturb him. I was more intimate with Will than our companions were, and this change of mood, so unusual with him, struck me very much.

Accordingly, when I missed him now, I strolled away across the little island in search of him. He was leaning against a tree by the water's edge, with folded arms, and was gazing at the water as it flowed between him and the Buckinghamshire shore, with a curious eagerness. He was in deep thought, and evidently in thought of no pleasant kind; his face was white, his brows were contracted. Thinking he must be ill, I hurriedly approached him, and laying my hand on his shoulder, cried:

"Why, Will, old boy, what's the matter?"

He made me no answer for a moment, and I had to repeat my question before he seemed to hear me. Then he started, and, with a strange abruptness of manner, replied:

"Nothing is the matter. What do you suppose is the matter?"

"You look pale," I said, "and you've not been yourself all day. I'm sure there's something wrong."

"I tell you there is nothing wrong. I wish you would leave me alone for a minute or two. It's hard I can't be allowed to be quiet in my own way," he answered, with a roughness that surprised me.

I kept my astonishment to myself, and turned away, saying:

"Very well. Have your own way. But recollect we must start in half an hour, or it will be getting late."

Our companions appeared to have no curiosity as to anybody's movements, nor did they seem to have missed either me or Will. I found them reclining, oblivious of all earthly things, with their pipes in their mouths, and their straw hats tilted on to their noses, and so evidently indisposed for conversation that I felt it was of no use to endeavour to arouse any interest in their minds as to Will and his eccentricities. Making the best of the situation, I joined them, and was presently gazing dreamily up at the bright blue sky through a grateful screen of overhanging leaves, and watching the smoke of my pipe as it floated off in the calm air. By-and-by the sky became dimmer, my pipe gradually dropped from my lips, and I fell insensibly into a heavy sleep.

I awoke presently with a start, and disposed, as is the custom with most mid-day sleepers, to declare I hadn't closed an eye. The assertion was unnecessary. My companions, who were lively enough now, were busily engaged in a violent metaphysical discussion, of the discursive nature suitable to such an occasion, and were not even disposed for bad jokes at my expense. The subject immediately under treatment was the engrossing one of ghosts and apparitions, and the argument was warm. As I rose, I saw Will Darton coming toward us along the path, more like himself than when I had left him by the river, but still with a disturbed look upon his face. Knowing it was time to start, I interrupted the eager talkers.

"Now, you fellows, if you mean to get to Marlow to-night, you must drop the subject and take to your oars instead. You can finish what you've got to say when you get in."

"Very well," said little Jack Long, the smallest and the most obstinate of the crew; "I've no objection. But I must say that of all the nonsense I ever heard, these two men have been talking the worst. Fred says he firmly believes in ghosts, although he knows nothing about them except from books; and the other lunatic knows a fellow who knows another fellow whose grandmother saw one, or something of that sort. I don't believe in ghosts myself. *I* never saw one, and I never saw anybody else who had ever seen one; and what's more, I don't believe that any man ever was told of a ghost by the man who had seen it. They're always at second hand."

Will Darton had stopped short as he heard the beginning of this speech. His face, pale before, became paler now; some strange fear seemed to be looking from his eyes, and it was evident he was much disturbed. When the speaker ceased, Will flushed, and, with an irritable excitement very unlike his usual self, interrupted the laughing protests of Jack's antagonists by crying, as he hastily advanced:

"*You!* *You* don't believe in ghosts. *You've* never been told of a ghost by a man who saw it. Good Heavens! Why I——"

He hastily checked himself, the flush faded from his cheek; once more he became deadly pale.

"Holloa! holloa!" said Jack. "What's the matter now? Are you the particular friend of the spectral world? or is that your polite way of intimating your belief in ghosts? Here, you two, here's an ally for you! But I shall be ready to tackle you all three when we get to Marlow."

"And if you are going to stop talking here much longer," I said, "we shall never get to Marlow. Come along, let's be off! Come, Will!"

He seemed to wake out of the same curious abstracted state as he had been in by the river side, and, taking my arm, went mechanically with me towards the boat.

"You'd better steer, Will," said little Jack Long. "Don't look well, you see" —to me—"and you, Charley, row stroke; I'll go up to bow, and then I can see that nobody shirks."

I took the stroke oar, and we started. As we passed the end of the island, Will looked nervously across the river; and as we left Greenlands behind and neared Ham-

bledon Lock, he was evidently under the influence of strong mental excitement. As we waited for the lock to open, he shuddered, as if with cold, and, when we were in the lock, he looked back more than once towards the way we had come. As we passed out, he gave a great sigh as of relief, and as we made for Medmenham, at a good pace—for it was getting dark—he seemed to revive. By the time we reached Marlow he was, but for his unaccustomed silence, apparently at ease, and, as the evening advanced, seemed to recover himself completely.

It was very warm in our room, and as I did not feel inclined for supper, I wandered for some time about the pretty garden of the inn, and leaning presently on the wall overlooking the weir, filled my pipe and began to smoke. It was a beautiful clear moonlight night. The water at my feet dashed in a mimic torrent over the weir with a cool and pleasant sound; in the shade beside me the river was dark enough, but further on and past the lock it ran, a stream of glittering silver, to the darkling hills beyond. On my right a broad meadow stretched away in the moonlight to the glorious Bisham woods, and the smell of its new-mown hay mingling with the pleasant garden scents, loaded the warm air with perfume. No sound but the rush of the water, and now and then the distant barking of a dog, broke the calm silence of the night. I looked long upon the beautiful scene, forgetting all but the sight before me, until I was aroused from my reverie by a man who came and leant upon the wall by my side. It was Will Darton. He was calm enough now, as he gazed out into the soft summer night, but for some time he was still silent. At last he spoke.

"Charley, old fellow, I beg your pardon for my rudeness and ill manners to-day. I had my reasons, believe me."

"Don't say another word on the subject," I said. "I saw you were ill, and thought no more of it."

"I was well enough; as well as I am now," he replied; "but I could not, hard as I tried, shake it off."

"It?" I asked, curiously.

"The thought that——" He broke off for a moment, and looked intently over the landscape; then resuming with a touch of the irritability I had noticed in him in the morning, said: "You heard Jack Long's profession of faith in the matter of apparitions?"

"Which you didn't seem to like? Yes."

"He said that he had never heard of a ghost from the man who had seen it. Have you ever heard of a ghost from the man who had seen it?" I shook my head with a smile. "Then you shall hear the story now. I should not like to tell it to those others; but I can tell it to you."

I was considerably startled. "Why, you don't mean to tell me that you ever saw a ghost?" I cried.

"That you shall judge of for yourself. Listen."

You recollect my being engaged to make those sketches of Thames scenery for that boating-book, three years ago?—well, that was the time. I had been idling down the river for a couple of months, working hard now and then, and taking spells of rest as the fit took me, and at last had worked my way down as far as Henley. I had a fancy for being independent of railways and of all sorts of locomotion not at my own control, and I had bought a boat for my cruise, roomy enough to hold all the materials I wanted and to accommodate a friend or so now and then. Often, during the earlier part of my voyage I had had companions: Jack Long was with me for two or three days, and you joined us, if you remember, for a week, idling about Streatley and Pangbourne. I had a companion, too, on my way from Mapledurham to Henley; I forget who it was, no matter now, but he left me at Henley, and I was alone. It was fine, hot, June weather, very favourable for my purpose, and I spent a week about the reaches we passed to-day, hard at work. I filled many sketch-books, and might have filled many more, but my time was growing short, and it was necessary that I should make a move. All the time I had been at Henley, some curious fascination seemed to take me down to Regatta Island. Often when I had planned a long day's work at the picturesque bits about Marsh Mills and the woods of Park-place, I felt an irresistible impulse to turn back and to row down the reach. I suppose I must have painted that horrible old temple, and that graceful clump of trees on Regatta Island a dozen times more than there was any occasion for me to do. I used to feel disgusted with myself at the repetition of the same views over and over again in my portfolio, but somehow or another, I could not get away from that part of the river.

At last my time at Henley was so nearly up that I had made all my arrangements for starting next day, when I received a

note from Dalrymple, an old friend and water-colour painter like myself, to say that he had taken a little cottage opposite Hambledon Lock, and that he was down for a month's sketching. He would be at home to-morrow night, he said, and would I give him a call before I left. Well, I had not seen Dalrymple for some time and, although I felt a secret presentiment that it would be well for me to refuse the invitation, I wrote to say I would dine with him next day. The day after that, I intended dropping down the river to Cookham, where I had plenty of work before me.

I slept but ill that night, harassed by I know not what fears and vague sense of trouble. When I awoke in the early morning there were heavy clouds about the sky, threatening thunder. I started in the afternoon; I had intended to take all my traps and paddle on, after I had left Dalrymple, to Marlow, but was obliged to abandon that intention and to arrange to return to Henley that night.

The thunder-clouds hung heavily about the hills when I started, and the river had that dull, lead-coloured hue, so ominous of bad weather. As I rowed past the Poplars, a few heavy drops fell spattering about me, and I almost decided on turning back. But it was my only chance for some time of seeing Dalrymple, whom I wanted much to see (you know he married my sister afterwards), and I went on. As I rowed on, the air cleared, and by the time I reached the island it was a fine bright day, though oppressively hot. I hung about all the afternoon sketching, and feeling it impossible to get away from the strange fascinations of the place, until it was absolutely necessary to lay down the sketch-book, and to row on to my destination.

How well I remember Greenlands that afternoon! The house was empty, and the old-fashioned green jalousies were closed. But for the beauty of the gardens it might have seemed deserted. The colours of the flowers were too bright to be dimmed, even by the formal arrangement of the beds in which they were set; the standard roses along the river terrace were just bursting into their wealth of blossom, the river's bank was fringed with clusters of blue forget-me-nots. On the other side of the river the meadows spread far away, the mowers were at work, the scent of new-mown hay came to me from them as it comes to me from those meadows there now.

As I passed down the river towards the weir, leaving, as you know, the lock on my left, I felt a strange shudder creeping over me that I could not account for. It is true that a black, lurid cloud was just then sweeping over the sun, but the air was warm enough, and it was no external chill I felt. I hadn't far to go. Dalrymple's cottage was just above the weir; I found him waiting for me, and in his welcome forgot the momentary sense of something wrong that had troubled me.

We had much to talk of, and, after dinner, paced up and down the little garden in front of his lodging until late. The moon was up, but a heavy bank of clouds was rising slowly beneath her, and it promised a bad night. More than once I tried to make a start, but something always prevented me, and it was fully eleven o'clock before I got into my boat. By that time the bank of clouds had broken, and was driving, under the force of an upper current of wind, across the sky. There was no wind below, but an ominous murmur among the rushes, and strange, sudden ripples on the water warned me that I must make the best of my way if I would escape a wetting.

I pushed off from the little stairs, and, as I started, a heavy thunder-cloud veiled the moon, and I was in darkness. I knew my way too well to be troubled by that, and sculled out into the stream, intending to make for the island on which the lock-house stands, and so across to the towpath side of the river.

As I got into the deeper shadow of the trees on the island I felt the shuddering feeling I had experienced in the morning. I almost persuaded myself to turn back, and to ask Dalrymple for shelter for the night; but, although the muttering thunder was by this time filling the air, and heavy drops of rain were beginning to fall, something I can't tell what, kept me on my course.

As I passed the head of the island, the darkness was intense, but there was light enough for me to see that I had reached the proper course, and I lay down to my work vigorously. At that moment, from under the very shadow, as it were, of the lock-gates, a punt silently emerged. Again I felt that nameless, objectless shudder. It was, as far as I could see, a common fisherman's punt, and there was one man in it. I wondered for a moment how he came to be there, the lock-gates being, as I could see, even in that dim light, shut. But I paid but little attention to him, and went on my own way. Presently I found the punt close to me, going, as it seemed to

me, exactly my pace, and the man in it, I could not help thinking, watching me. This feeling made me uneasy, and I quickened my pace. The punt shot after me, and was presently alongside. I eased, and paddled quietly. The punt dropped back, and was again alongside my skiff. And now I noticed that it passed over the water noiselessly, that the man's punt-pole made no sound as it was dropped into the water, no sound as he recovered it and dragged it through the water for a fresh purchase. Its occupant now kept his head towards the shore away from me, and sometimes seemed to stop and listen, as if he expected to hear some one in pursuit. But, whether he stopped or whether he worked, his punt, black against the black water, kept on her noiseless way, and kept with me. As we passed Greenlands the clock struck half-past eleven, and, aroused by the sound, I called to my unwelcome companion, "What o'clock's that?" more, I fancy, for the sake of breaking the stillness that was oppressing me than for any other reason, for I felt that I should get no answer. As I expected, there was no reply. The punt went on its way, stopping when I stopped, keeping pace with me when I rowed fast, its mysterious occupant always apparently ignorant of my very existence, continually pausing to listen for something he appeared to expect.

I tried to persuade myself there was nothing in all this, but I began to feel a sense of terror creeping over me that I found it impossible to resist. By this time we were nearing Regatta Island, and while I was watching with absorbed interest the silent progress of the punt by my side, it suddenly, apparently without any increased exertion on the part of its occupant, shot ahead of me, and, crossing my bows, made over towards the Bucks shore. At this moment, a bright flash of lightning lit up the country with surprising distinctness, and left everything so dark afterwards, that, although I felt the punt was again alongside, but this time on my left instead of my right hand, I could hardly make it out. The man's face was toward me now, I knew, and I peered curiously through the darkness to see what manner of man this strange companion of mine might be. It had grown very dark. The moon was quite concealed by heavy storm-clouds. I could not see the man's features, but could make out that he was looking earnestly and eagerly in the direction from which we had come. So for a few strokes the punt, although its occupant stood motionless, and watching, still keeping its way, until we were close on the bushes at the tail of the island. Another vivid flash of lightning showed the punt and man to me, within a few yards, as clear as daylight could have done. And, O Heaven! what a face that brief moment's light showed me! An old man, with short grizzled hair, that seemed to stand on end under the influence of some frightful horror; his face was ghastly pale, except where a livid scar that seamed his cheek showed red across the ashy skin; his throat was bare, and he seemed to have been in a struggle, for his shirt and loose velveteen jacket were torn about his neck, and the shaggy whiskers under his chin were in great disorder. I fancied, too, that there was blood upon his breast and face. I was sure there was upon his hands. His eyes, with the light of a mad horror in them, awful in its intensity, were staring through the darkness towards the lock-house, and he seemed to be straining every nerve to catch some sound from that quarter. I saw, at the same time, hardly knowing how I saw it in that short moment, a gun leaning against the well of the punt.

While yet I was fascinated by the horror of the sight, he disappeared behind the bushes, and as the black darkness settled again upon the scene, a rattling peal of thunder awoke the echoes of the hills. I was too startled for a moment to row, and lay upon my sculls vainly trying to explain to myself what I had seen; but, finding my boat drifting down with the stream, started once more. Hardly had I done so before I was alarmed by the report of a gun, close at hand, as it seemed, followed by a loud splash in the water. Connecting this at once with the man I had seen, I rowed round to the other side of the island as fast as I could, and hailed him loudly. There was no answer, and I could see nothing. I rowed up and down the length of the island half a dozen times, but without result. The man and punt were gone. I could not understand it. The man's wild, strange appearance, his evident terror, and the disorder of his dress alarmed me. And then the gun and the splash! What was it? What could have happened? I rowed uneasily about the spot for some time, until a horror of it and of what I had seen completely mastered me, and I made the best of my way to Henley. The storm was now at its height, and raging with great fury.

I tied my boat up to the stairs, and went at once to my lodgings. There was no one about, and even if there had been I think the strange sensation I felt would have prevented my saying anything about the events of the night. All night I tossed and turned uneasily in my bed. Whenever I closed my eyes, I saw again the livid scar-marked face, the straining wild eyes, the bloody hands. The recollection of that one brief moment terrified me more than I can express. I felt as if it would be impossible to forget it; and indeed I feel so still. Towards morning I fell into an uneasy sleep, in which the occurrences of my night row repeated themselves over and over again, and when I awoke I was feverish and unrefreshed.

It was a bright, clear, fresh morning after the storm, and although I felt by no means well, I thought the row to Cookham would do me good. So I held to my purpose (which I had when I first awoke for a moment thought of abandoning) and started. As I neared the island I felt a strange inexplicable dread of meeting the man I had seen last night, but although I felt as if my doing so would increase the chance of a meeting, I rowed along the Bucks shore where I had missed the punt. There was nothing to be seen near the island, nothing all the way to the lock, but as I rowed along that piece of water I felt creeping over me the cold shuddering feeling that I had felt as I left Dalrymple the previous evening. Nothing appeared to have occurred in the neighbourhood out of the usual course. The lock-keeper returned my "good morning" without entering into conversation, as I felt sure he would have done if any strange occurrence had happened during the night. Once through the lock the chill feeling of terror which had oppressed me, disappeared gradually, and I began to persuade myself that I had exaggerated what I had seen; but I could not shake off the memory of the face.

By the time I reached Marlow I felt so tired and ill, that I gave up the idea of going any further that day. Not to lose time, however, I determined to take some sketches of Bisham, and as I felt indisposed for any more rowing, I took old Tom Peacock, the fisherman, with me to scull. Tom was, as you know, a garrulous old fellow, and he soon began to talk. He rambled on for some time with his fishing stories and his poaching adventures, all of which I had heard before, and to which, consequently, I paid but little attention. Presently, when the stream of his loquacity had run a little dry, I asked him, more for the sake of saying something than because I felt any interest in the question, whether the storm had been bad last night at Marlow.

"Bad?" said old Tom; "ay, that it were. I dunno as ever I see a badder, excep' one, three year ago, and just about this time that were, too. Why, what day of the month were yesterday?"

"The twenty-first."

"The twenty-first of June," said the old man, lowering his voice; "why, that were the very day it was done, three year ago."

"It was done? what was done? What do you mean?" The cold chill came over me again, and I almost fancied I could see the face again.

"Didn't ye hear of it afore?" asked Tom. "Ah, no, I remember, you haven't been this way for some time, and p'raps you missed it in Lunnon papers. Well, you see, sir, this was the way of it. You didn't know old Kit Garth, the fisherman, up Hambledon way, maybe? No? Ah, it wasn't over much he was on the river! He lived best part of his time drinking at the public, and I don't think he was over-particular as to how he got his money. However, that's no business of mine, you know. Old Kit was a terrible old rascal, surely, and a pretty life he and his son, who was a'most as big a blackguard as his father, led poor old Mrs. Garth. She was a decent sort of body enough, too good for the likes of Kit; and although he used to beat her, and well-nigh starve her sometimes, she never complained. I believe she was fond of 'em both somehow, and certainly the young 'un used to be a bit kind to her by times, and protected her against the old man now and then; but you see, sir, it wasn't often as he could do that, for in general, as sure as old Kit was drunk, young Kit was drunk too. Well, they went on at this sort o' life for some time, sometimes in prison for assaults, sometimes for poaching and that (though there ain't much in that, I think), until one day it came to a regular blow up. The two men had been drinking hard, and the old 'un, so soon as ever he got home, begun a bullyragging and a punching the missus. Well, the young 'un he interfered, and the upshot of it was as there was a reg'lar fight. What happened exactly nobody never rightly knowed; except one thing, and that was, that in the morning old Kit had got a awful cut right across the cheek,

and that young Kit was off. We never saw no more of him. Folks said he'd gone for a sodger and got shot in the Crimea, but I don't know nothing about that. After he'd gone things went on worse and worse with the Garths, and old Kit, whose beauty wasn't improved by the scar left by his son's parting present, seemed to go right off his head like, when he'd got his drink aboard, and ill-used his wife worse than ever. Well, sir, to make a long story short, one night, it was the twenty-first of June three year ago, old Kit went home from the public at a little afore eleven o'clock, not quite drunk, although he'd been drinking hard. It was a tremendous bad night, thundering and lightening fearful, and a deal of rain a falling, but old Kit didn't mind that, and set off for his cottage, which was about a mile from the river. Nobody seed him on the road home; there wasn't many people about such a night as that, as you may suppose, sir, and nobody seed him go into his house. A little after eleven the neighbours was aroused by frightful screams and cries of murder from old Kit's cottage; and although they was used to strange noises from there now and then, some of 'em thought it sounded more serious this time, and turned out to see what was up. They found the garden-gate and cottage-door both open, and between 'em, as if she'd run out with her last strength, they found the poor old woman. Her head and face had been all battered in with some heavy instrument, and I was told by them as picked her up that it was a most dreadful sight to see. She was stone dead, o' course. There wasn't much doubt about who'd done it. The poor old creetur had got hold of a handful of grey whiskers and a piece of old Kit's neckercher, and old Kit himself, and his gun, was not to be found. The alarm was raised, and the constables came, and they hunted about for old Kit all that night, but managed of course to go every way but the right, until it was too late. At last they goes down to the lock, and they says to the keeper, who hadn't heard nothing o' what had been going on, 'Ha' ye seen anything o' old Garth?' 'Yes,' says the lock-keeper. He'd come down there about two hours ago, had jumped into his punt which was a lying just outside the lock-gates, and gone off up the river. The keeper told 'em he didn't half like the old man's looks. He just see him by the light of a flash of lightening, and he said his face looked like death, and as if there was somethin' horrible after him. He'd got his gun with him, the keeper said, and his shirt was all tore about his throat as if he'd ha' been having a fight. The constables they went off to Henley, hot-foot, but they didn't find no Kit, and for a good reason too. The next morning his punt, with nothing in it but the gun, was found among the piles of the weir, and when they got the gun they got the thing as the murder was done with, for the poor old woman's grey hair was a sticking to the butt. As for Kit, he turned up about three days after, washed up against the lock-gates, and it was pretty clear how he came there, for he had a shot-hole in his breast big enough to put your hand in. That was just such another night as last night was—I mind it well."

That was the story old Tom told me; I remember every word he said as distinctly as possible. I knew when he began, by the feeling of horror that possessed me, that I was going to hear the explanation of my last night's mystery. I felt then that what I had seen was not of this world. I don't think it had so presented itself to me before, except by the unreasoning terror with which the thought of it filled my mind.

I suffered greatly for some time afterwards. I have never yet completely got over the remembrance of that awful face; at first it was terrible, I had not been to Henley since then until to-day, and if I had known when we first started that you would have stopped at the Island, I should have made some excuse to come on by road. As it was, it was not until we had actually started that I remembered it was the twenty-first of June. The old fear came over me as we neared the place, and, against my will, I felt compelled to watch for the figure I saw that night. Now I have seen the place again *without it*, I hope the impression will fade from my mind. Hush! there is Jack Long; not a word of this to him.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I. IN HARNESS.

It was the autumn of the year, in the spring of which Walter Joyce had returned to London from Westhope. Six months had elapsed since he had read, what he had almost imagined to be his death-warrant in Marian's reply to his letter containing the Berlin proposal. It was not his death-warrant; he had survived the shock, and, indeed, had borne the disappointment in a way that he did not think possible when the blow first fell upon him. Under the blessed, soothing influence of time, under the perhaps more effectual influence of active employment, his mind had been weaned from dwelling on that dread blank which, as he at first imagined, was to have been his sole outlook for the future. He was young, and strong, and impressionable; he returned to London inclined to be misanthropical and morose, disposed to believe in the breaking of hearts and the crushing of hopes, and the rather pleasant sensations of despair. But after a very short sojourn in the metropolis, he was compelled to avow to himself the wisdom of Lady Caroline Mansergh's prognostications concerning him, and the absolute truth of everything she had said. A life of moping, of indulgence in preposterous cynicism and self-compassion, was not for him; he was meant for far better things—action in the present, distinction in the future—those were to be his aims, and, after a fortnight's indolence and moodiness, he had flung himself into the work that was awaiting, and began to labour at it with all his energy and all his brain-power.

Some little time afterwards, when Joyce thought over his mental condition in those first days of his return to London, the cheap cynicism, the pettishness, and the languor which he had suffered to possess him, he wondered within himself why old Jack Byrne, with whom he had taken up his quarters, had not rebuked him for it, and one day, with some considerable confusion, he asked the old man the reason.

"Why didn't I speak to you about it, and pitch into you for it, my boy?" said the old man, with his peculiar soft laugh. "Because it's best to let some things have their run, and come to a stop of their own accord. I saw plainly enough what would be the result of that love business, long ago, when you first told me of it. Why didn't I say so then? Why, you don't imagine I should have attempted to influence you in such a matter, when I had never even seen the lady, and had only general experience to take as my guide? I did give you as many hints as I thought prudent or decent in a letter which I wrote to you, my lad; but you didn't seem to profit by them much, or, indeed, to take any heed of them. You went sailing away straight and smoothly enough until that squall came down upon you and carried away your masts and your rigging, and left you a helpless log tossing on the waters. It was so nice to be a helpless log, wasn't it?—so nice, that you thought you would never be anything else. But, God bless you, I knew differently; I'd seen the same case a hundred times before, and I knew if you were left alone you would come all right in time. And now you have come all right, and you're doing your work well, and they think highly of you at the Comet office."

"I'm glad of that; that's the best news you could give me. Do they think well of me? Do they think I do my work well, and——"

"Good Lord, what a swallow the lad has for flummery!" grumbled old Byrne. "He'd like me to repeat every word of praise to him. It's wonderful to see how he glows under it,—no, not wonderful, when one recollects how young he is. Ah, youth, youth! Do they? Yes, of course they do; you know that well enough. It's deuced lucky you gave up that notion of going to Berlin, Walter, boy."

"Yes," said Joyce, with a sigh, as he remembered all about the proposal; "I'm better here."

"Better here, I should think you were, indeed! A correspondent can't do much in the way of making his mark. He can be serious and well-informed, or chatty and nonsensical; he can elect between describing the councils of cabinets or the circumference of crinolines; but in either case his scope is limited, and he can never get much fame for himself. Now in your present position as an essayist and leader-writer of remarkable ability—oh, you needn't pretend to blush, you know I shouldn't say what I didn't think—there is possibly a very bright future in store for you! And to think that years ago you possessed a distaste for politics!"

"It does seem ridiculous," said Walter, smiling. "I am always amused when I remember my very wilful ignorance on such matters. However, the credit of the conversion, if credit there be, is entirely owing to you and O'Connor."

"Not entirely, I'm thinking," said the old man. "I recollect your telling me of a conversation you had with Lady Caroline Mansergh, in which certain hopes were expressed and certain suggestions made, which, I should say, had their effect in influencing your conduct. Am I right, Walter?" And Mr. Byrne looked hard and keenly from under his bushy eyebrows at his young friend.

"Perfectly right!" said Walter, meeting his glance. "I think that the remembrance of Lady Caroline's advice, and the knowledge that she thought I had within me the power of distinguishing myself, were the first inducements to me to shake off that horrible lethargic state into which I had fallen!"

"Well, we must take care that you fulfil all her ladyship's expectations, Walter! What you are doing now must merely be a stepping-stone to something much better. I don't intend to die until I have seen you a leader in the people's cause, my boy! Oh, yes, I allow you're soundly with them now, and fight their battles well and effectively with the pen; but I want to live to see you in Parliament, to hear you riddling the plutocrats with your banter, and overwhelming the aristocrats with your scorn!"

"My dear old friend, I fear you pitch the note a little too high," said Joyce, with a laugh. "I don't think you will ever see me among the senators."

"And why not?" asked old Byrne, in a very excited manner—"and why not, pray? Is there any one speaks better at the Club? Is there any one more popular among the leaders of the cause, or with them? If those miserable Tories had not swallowed the leek fifty times in succession, as they have just done, and thereby succeeded in clinging to office for yet a few months, the chiefs of the party, or at least of one section of it—the 'ultras,' as they are good enough to call us—would have relied greatly on your advice and assistance, and when the election comes, as come it must within a very short time, you will see how you will be in requisition. And about your position, Walter? I think we should look to that at once. I think you should lose no time in entering yourself at some Inn of Court, and commence reading for the bar!"

"Don't ask me to make any change in my life at present, old friend!" said Walter. "No!" as he saw the old man with an impatient gesture about to speak—"no, I was not going to plead the want of the money; for, in the first place, I know you would lend it to me, and in the second I am myself making, as you know, an excellent income. But I don't want to undertake anything more just now than what I am actually engaged in. I am quite sufficiently occupied—and I am very happy."

Old Byrne was compelled to be satisfied with this declaration, but he grumbled out that it should only be temporary, and that he intended to see Walter in a very different position before he died.

Walter Joyce said nothing more than the truth when he said that he was very happy. He had fallen into exactly the kind of life which suited him, the pursuance of a congenial occupation amongst companions of similar tastes. There are, I take it, but few of us professional plyers of the pen who do not look back with regret and with something akin to wonder

to that halcyon time when we first entered upon authorship; when the mere act of writing was in itself pleasant, when the sight of a proof-sheet was calculated to fill one with infinite delight, when one glowed with delight at praise, or writhed in agony under attack. In after life, when the novelty has entirely worn off, when the Pegasus which ambled, and kicked, and pranced, has settled down into the serviceable hack of ordinary use, often obliged, like other hacks, to go through his work and to put forth his paces at inopportune times and seasons, it seems impossible to believe that this freshness of feeling, this extraordinary enthusiasm, can ever have existed; unless, perchance, you see the reflex of yourself in some one else who is beginning to pursue the sunny verdant end of that path which with you at present has worn down into a very commonplace beaten track, and then you perceive that the illusion was not specially your own, but is common to all who are in that happy glorious season of youth.

Walter Joyce was thoroughly happy. He had pleasant rooms in Staples Inn—a quiet, quaint, old-world place, where the houses, with their overhanging eaves and gabled roofs and mullioned windows recal memories of Continental cities and college "quads," and yet are only just shut off from the never-ceasing bustle and riot of Holborn. The furniture of these rooms was not very new, and there was not very much of it; but the sitting-room boasted not merely of two big easy chairs, but of several rows of bookshelves, which had been well filled, by Jack Byrne's generosity, with books which the old man had himself selected; and in the bedroom there was a bed and a bath, which, in Joyce's opinion, satisfied all reasonable expectations. Here, in the morning, he read or wrote; for he was extending his connexion with literature, and found a ready market for his writings in several of the more thoughtful periodicals of the day. In the afternoon he would go down to the Comet office, and take part in the daily conference of the principal members of the staff. There present would be Mr. Warren, the proprietor of the paper, who did not understand much about journalism, as, indeed, could scarcely be expected of him, seeing that the whole of his previous life had been taken up in attending to the export provision trade, in which he had made his fortune, but who was a capital man of business, looked after the financial affairs of the concern, and limited his interference with the conduct of the paper in listening to what others had to say. There would be Mr. Saltwell, who devoted himself to foreign politics, who was a wonderful linguist and a skilful theological controversialist, and who, in his tight drab trousers, cut-away coat, and bird's-eye cravat, looked like a racing-trainer or a tout; Mr. Gowan, a Scotchman, a veteran journalist of enormous experience, who, as he used to say, had had scores of papers "killed under him;" Mr. Forrest, a slashing writer, but always in extremes, and who was always put on to any subject which it was required should be highly lauded or shamefully abused—it did not matter much to Mr. Forrest, who was a man of the world; and Mr. Ledingham, a man of great learning but very ponderous in style and recondite in subject, whose articles were described by Mr. Skimmer as being "like roast pig, very nice occasionally, but not to be indulged in often with impunity," were also usual attendants at the conference, which was presided over by the recognised editor of the Comet, Terence O'Connor.

Mr. O'Connor was the type of a class of journalists which yet exists, indeed, but is not nearly so numerous as it was a few years ago. Your newspaper editor of to-day dines with the duke and looks in at the countess's reception; his own reporter includes him amongst the distinguished company which he, the reporter, "observes" at select reunions; he rides in the Park, and drives down to his office from the House of Commons, where he has been the centre of an admiring circle of members, in his brougham. Shades of the great men of bygone days—of White and Berry, of Kew and Captain Shandon—think of that! Terence O'Connor was of the old school. He had made journalism his profession since he left Trinity, and had only won his position by hard labour and untiring perseverance, had written in and edited various provincial newspapers, had served his time as sub and hack on the London press, and had eventually risen to the editorial chair which he filled so admirably. A man of vast learning, with the simplicity of a child, of keen common-sense tempered with great amicability, an admirable writer, an ardent politician, wielding great power with never-failing impartiality, Terence O'Connor passed his life in a world in which he was exceptionally influential, and to which he was comparatively unknown. His neighbours at Clap-

ham had no idea that the slim grey-haired gentleman whom they saw pottering about in his garden on summer afternoons, or lying on the grass under the shade of a big tree playing with his children, was the lightning-compeller and the thunder-creator of the Comet. Though most earnest while engaged in his work, it was his greatest delight to leave every trace of it behind him at his office, and to be entirely free from its influence when at home with his wife and children. Occasionally, of course, the few old friends who dined with him would start a political or literary discussion, in which he would bear his part, but he was never happy until the conversation found its way back into the ordinary social channels, or until a demand was made for music, of which he was passionately fond. It was a lucky thing for Walter Joyce to make the acquaintance and to win the regard of such a man as Terence O'Connor, who had a wonderfully quick eye for character, and who, having noticed Walter's readiness of appreciation and bright incisive style in the few articles which he wrote on the occasion of his first introduction by Mr. Byrne, suggested that the post at Berlin should be offered to him. The more they were thrown together the better they liked each other. Walter had the greatest admiration for O'Connor's talent and power of work, while the elder man looked kindly on his young friend's eagerness and enthusiasm, his desire for distinction, and his delight at laudation, perhaps as somewhat reflecting his own feelings before he had become settled down to the mill-horse grind—ah, how many years ago!

After the conference had broken up, Joyce, to whom, perhaps, a subject had been given to treat, would go back to his chambers and work at it for two or three hours, or he would remain at the office discussing the matter in detail with Terence O'Connor, and taking his friend's advice as to the manner of treatment. Or, if he were free, he would lounge in the Park, and stare at the equipages, and the toilettes, and the London panorama of luxury there constantly going by, all new to the country-bred young man, to whom, until he went to Lord Hetherington's, the old rumbling chariot of Sir Thomas Churchill, with its worsted-epauletted coachman and footmen, was a miracle of comfort and a triumph of taste. Or he would ramble out with Shimmer, or Forrest, or some other of his colleagues, to the suburbs, over the breezy heights of Hampstead, or through the green Willesden lanes, and get the city dust and smoke blown out of them. When he was not on duty at the office at night, Walter would sometimes take the newspaper admission and visit the theatre, but he had little taste for the drama, or rather, perhaps, for such dramatic representations as were then in vogue, and it pleased him much more to attend the meetings of the Forum, a club constituted for the purpose of discussing the principal political and social questions of the day, and composed of young barristers, and newspaper writers, with a sprinkling of public-office men, who met in the large room of a tavern situated in one of the quiet streets leading from Fleet-street to the river. The leaders of the different political parties, and others whose deeds or works had given them celebrity or notoriety, were happy in their ignorance of the existence of the Forum, or they must have been rendered uncomfortable by finding themselves the objects of so much wild denunciation. The members of the Forum were not in the habit of concealing their opinions, or of moderating the language in which those opinions were expressed, and the debate in which the then holders of office were not denounced as effete and useless nincompoops, bound by degrading ties of subserviency to a policy which, while originally dangerous, was now degrading, or in which the leaders of the Opposition were not stigmatised as base-bred ruffians, linked together by the common bond of ignorance with the common hope of rapine—was considered dull and spiritless indeed. As Mr. Byrne had intimated, Walter Joyce was one of the most prominent members of this debating club; he had a clear resonant voice, capable of excellent modulation, and spoke with fluency. His speeches, which were tinged with a far more pronounced radicalism—the effect of the teaching of Jack Byrne—than had previously been promulgated at the meetings of the Forum, soon became widely talked of among the members and their friends, and Walter's rising was eagerly looked forward to, and warmly hailed, not merely for the novelty of his doctrine, but for the boldness and the humour with which he sought to inculcate it. His success was so great that the heads of the Tory party in the club became alarmed, and thought it necessary to send off for Alister Portcullis, who was formerly the great speaker on their side, but who had recently become editor of a pro-

vincial paper, to return to town, and oppose Joyce on one or two special subjects of discussion. Portcullis came up to London, and the encounter took place before a room crowded to the ceiling (it was rumoured—and believed by some—that the Premier and the leader of the Opposition were present, with wigs drawn over their eyes, and comforters over their noses) and re-echoing to the cheers of the partisans. Walter was understood to have held his own, and, indeed, to have had the best of it; but Portcullis made a very good speech, covering his opponent with sarcasm and invective, and declaiming against the cause which he represented with a whirlwind of fury which greatly incensed old Jack Byrne, who happened to be sitting immediately beneath him.

Political feeling ran very high just at that time, and the result of the forthcoming election was looked forward to with the greatest confidence by the Radicals. The organisation of the party was very complete, a central committee, of which Mr. Byrne and Terence O'Connor were members, had its sittings in London, and was in daily communication with the various local committees of the principal provincial towns, and most of the intending candidates had been despatched to make a tour of the neighbourhood which they proposed to represent, with the view of ascertaining the feelings of the electors, and ingratiating themselves with them.

Among these touring candidates was young Mr. Bokenham, who aspired to represent the constituency of Brocksopp. Young Bokenham had been selected by the central committee principally because his father was a very influential manufacturer, and because he himself, though not specially clever or deeply versed in politics, was recommended as fluent, of good appearance, and eminently docile and leadable. The reports which during and after his visit came up from the local to the central committee by no means bore out the recommendation. The fact was that young Mr. Bokenham, who had at a very early age been sent to Eton, who had been a gentleman commoner of Christchurch, and who had always had his own way and the command of large sums of money to enable him to do as he pleased, had become, as is very often the case under the influence of such surroundings, a perfect type of the parvenu and the plutocrat, and had, if anything, rather an antipathy for that cause of which he was about to offer himself as one of the representatives. To announce this would, however, he was aware, be simply to renounce the very large fortune which would accrue to him at his father's death, and which the old man, who had been a staunch Radical from his earliest days, and who gloried in being a self-made man, would certainly have dispersed through a thousand charitable channels rather than allow one penny of it to be touched by his politically-renegade son. Moreover, young Bokenham pined for the distinction of parliament membership, which he knew, for the present at least, was only to be obtained by holding to his father's political principles, and so he professed to be in earnest in the matter, and went down to Brocksopp and called on the principal people of the place, and convened a few meetings and delivered a few speeches. But the Brocksopp folk were very badly impressed. They utterly failed to recognise young Tommy Bokenham, as they had always spoken of him among themselves during all the years of his absence, in the bearded, natty-booted, delicate-gloved gentleman, who minced his words and used a perfumed handkerchief, and talked about the chah-tah of our lib-ah-ties. His manner was unpleasant and offensive, and his matter was not half sufficiently peppered to suit the tastes of the Brocksopp Radicals, who could not be too frequently reminded that they were the salt of the earth, and that the horny hand of labour was what their intending representative was always wishing to clasp. Young Mr. Bokenham, no longer Tommy after he had once been seen, objected to the horny hand of labour, disliked the smell of factories, and the manner and appearance of the working-classes altogether. He could not drink much at the public-houses, and the smell of the strong shag tobacco made him ill, and in fact his first tour for canvassing was a woful and egregious failure, and was so reported to the central committee in London by their Brocksopp agents.

On this report the committee met, and had a long and earnest consultation. Brocksopp was an important place, and one which it was most desirable to secure. No other candidate possessing such wealth, or such local influence, as young Bokenham could be found, and it was therefore imperative that he should be carried through. It was, however, necessary that his mistakes should be pointed out to him, and he should be thoroughly well schooled and advised as to

his future proceedings. He was accordingly invited to attend the next meeting of the committee, which he did, and received a three hours' drilling with great composure. He promised to adopt all the suggestions which were made, and to carry out all the plans which were proposed. Walter Joyce, who happened to be present, was much amused at Mr. Bokenham's great amiability and power of acquiescence, and was about saying so to Mr. Byrne, who was seated next him, when he was startled by hearing the candidate say, in answer to a question from one of the committee as to whether any one was in the field on the Tory side,

"Oh yes; an old gentleman named Creswell, a retired manufacturer of great wealth and position in those parts."

"Is he likely to make a strong fight?"

"Well, ya-as!" drawled young Bokenham. "Old boy's not supposed to care particularly about it himself, don't you know, but he's lately married a young wife—doosid pretty woman, and all that kind of thing—and they say she's set her heart on becoming the memberess."

"Do you hear that?" whispered Byrne to Joyce.

"I do!" replied Walter. "This man is a fool, but he must be got in, and Mr. Creswell must be kept out, at all hazards."

And Jack Byrne grinned.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST (ESSEX). BARKING TO BRAINTREE.

THE restless inquisitive bird, his wings still wet with the soft spray of the Atlantic, rising from his favourite perch, the massive gold cross upon the airy summit of St. Paul's great dome, bears away for the flat green pastures, soaking vapours, and river-side marshes of fertile Essex, the calf-breeding, oyster-rearing, teazle-growing county, of a million acres and four hundred thousand inhabitants. The patient toilers in the saffron, hop, and carraway fields; the men scooping out Colchester oysters for Billingsgate; the Maldon fishermen, red-faced and scale-bespangled as Tritons; the drovers of Pleshy bringing the wayward calves to Essex railway stations; the heavy-built Dutch sailors at Harwich, will not observe the silent bird as he drifts by, a mere black flake against the rainy sky, reconnoitring, like a military spy from a balloon, the marshy, well-wooded, well-watered county that forms the dull muddy shore of the Thames from Blackwall, at the confluence of the Lea, to Shoeburyness.

At Barking the bird first alights on the banks of the Roding. Barking was the Barging of the Saxons—"the fort in the meadow"—and the blunt lines (so long is Time in effacing man's work) may still be traced of the old walls that, perhaps, Saxon thanes raised to protect their churls or neatherds from those Danes who sacked and burnt London in 835. Whether the Danish robbers—as good sailors as horsemen—had discovered the juicy richness of Essex beeves as early as the time of Alfred, who twice rebuilt London, is uncertain, Dr. Dryasdust kindly informs us; but this at least is sure, that in 870 the hardy Norsemen ran up Barking Creek, and massacred or carried off a whole convent of Benedictine nuns, planted at Barking in 670 by Erkenwald, a Saxon Bishop of London. King Edgar raised again the shattered and desecrated convent of Barking, where so much martyrs' blood had been shed by the rude Pagan hands. After the death of this amorous, wolf-slaying, monk-beloved king, his widow, Elfrida (to win whom Edgar had murdered her first husband), was made abbess of Barking, and the convent became a royal one, inferior only to Wilton, Winchester, and Shaftesbury. The Barking abbess was lady paramount of all the manors in the half hundred, and a very great lady, therefore, at Chadwell, Ilford, and Ripple, and much to be honoured wherever her plain black and white robes were seen, whether she angled with her nuns upon the Thames, or ambled on her palfrey towards the cool green glades of Epping. Through the pointed arch of that square embattled Barking gateway many generations of half-willing sisters of the convent have passed to their living death within, and to their burial without, the icy prison walls. The abbey remained wealthy for eight or nine centuries, for even at the Dissolution it was valued at one thousand and eighty-four pounds six shillings and twopence (a large sum for those times), and Edward the Sixth, feeding his noble bloodhounds with rich sops, as Henry the Eighth had done his ravening pack, granted Barking Convent to Lord Clinton.

When the Conqueror had slain Harold on the cliff, borne down through brave Kent upon sturdy and pugnacious London, and burnt Southwark, just as a slight sample of what he could do, he retired to the little quiet Essex village of Barking, where the London portreeves, aldermen, and burgesses swore fealty to him, while his fighting Bishop of Rochester, Gundulphus, was building a White Tower on the site of Cæsar's river-side castrum. There, amid the green meadows, with an outlook on Barking Creek, the fierce Norman received homage from those proud chieftains so slow to surrender, Morcar, Earl of Northumberland, and Edwyn, Earl of Mercia. When William returned to town to raise his banners upon his new White Tower, Bainard, one of his barons, built a castle in Upper Thames-street (Carron Iron Company), and Gilbert de Montfichet another in Blackfriars (Times Office; Printing-house-square); so there was a triple curb in the mouth of poor prostrate London. One great man at least has therefore trodden the streets of the Essex market town. And what else does Barking boast? Well, an Elizabethan market-house, and the right

(thanks to the grant of Mr. Fowkes in 1686) of sending two boys to Christ's Hospital, where, probably, at this very moment, two noisy hearty Barking boys, in belted blue petticoats and canary-bird stockings, disport behind the playground bars, or con undelectable Dilectus in vaulted rooms. If you were to call out, "Any one here from Barking?" off the Dogger Bank or in a fleet of herring vessels off the Scotch coast, a good many hoarse Essex voices would answer you; for Barking's sons are hardy Norsemen, and frequenting all the finest waters round our tight little island, return to bear their scaly spoil to Billingsgate. Other hardy Norsemen bring coal and timber to Barking Wharf, while her less enterprising, but still scarcely less commendable, children cultivate the great tracts of potatoes that bloom around Barking.

But have we not forgotten the one great event which convulsed Barking since the arrival of the Conqueror and his luggage? It was in a sly house near Barking that the Gunpowder Plot is supposed to have been brewed. At Barking, and in a house at Butcher-row (Pickett-street, now pulled down for the new Law Courts), the bloodthirsty enthusiasts planned the destruction of the King, Lords, and Commons in one instantaneous whirlwind of fire. It was the wild and desperate thought of Catesby, and he had proposed it to Percy, one of the Northumberland family, who, in a sally of passion, had talked of killing the king. These two "instruments of divine wrath" against the heretics, as they believed themselves to be, had sent Thomas Winter to Flanders to bring over Fawkes. They had, at first, scruples about destroying the Catholic noblemen who might be present as spectators or attendants of the king when he opened the Houses of Parliament; but Desmond, a priest, and Garnet, the superior of the English Jesuits, had reasoned them out of all those absurd doubts, and proved to them that the interests of true religion required the holocaust. Four of the conspirators, Sir Everard Digby, Rookwood, Tresham, and Grant, when the mines were fired, were to attack Lord Harrington's house in Warwickshire, seize the Princess Elizabeth, and proclaim her queen. The king's second son, Charles, was to be seized or assassinated by Percy. All through the spring and summer of 1604, after the Hampton Court conference, where the pedant king sat as an arbitrating Solomon between the servile bishops and the anti-Ritualistic Puritans, these black-souled men of Barking lurked in ambush in the quiet Essex town, and laid their plans. They bound some twenty conspirators to secrecy, and made them, when they took their oath, receive the sacrament. All that spring and summer they spent to and fro between Butcher-row and Barking, or shut up with arms and provisions in the house they had hired next door to St. Stephen's Chapel, where they dug through a wall three yards thick, and hiring a coal-cellar next it, filled it with thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, covered with fagots and billets of wood. We all know how the attempt failed; the midnight before parliament opened, Fawkes was seized at the door of the vault, with slow-matches and tinder in his pocket. Under the combined tortures of the dungeon of Little Ease, the Crushing Boots, the Scavenger's Daughter, and the dislocating Rack his spirit gave way, and he disclosed the names of all his accomplices. There is an old London tradition that Catesby, Percy, and other of the conspirators, stood on a hill, still unbuilt over, a little to the right of the Hampstead-road, and waited for the great crash to come, and the pillar of red smoke to rise; but, hearing that Fawkes was taken and the game lost, they took horse there and dashed off to Warwickshire to aid Digby in seizing the Princess Elizabeth, who had, however, already escaped to Coventry and roused the country. Fawkes, Digby, Rookwood, Winter, and Garnet, the Jesuit, were all beheaded and quartered in Smithfield.

From Barking to Epping is no great flight. Of all places of Cockney pilgrimage round London, there is none so dear to the Eastern Londoner as Epping, and the ten thousand acres of brushwood, coppice, and scrubby plantation that constitute those romantic and agreeable fictions known as Epping and Hainault forests. Thither, all the year through, from cold, cheerless, early spring and the later time of May blossoms—all through burning dusty Junes down to oak-apple days or the fall of the leaf, those long covered vans, indigenous to London holidays, repair. Temperance clubs, and the reverse, Foresters in green tunics and brigand boots, citizens of all kinds, jovial, noisy, ever fond of refreshment and "kiss in the ring," drive out to the quondam forest, and return more jaded than their horses. The habit of these revellers is to reappear waving green boughs, roaring Champagne Charlie, Tommy Dodd, or some other convivial idiotcy of the day; it is considered "the right thing" among them for the men to wear the women's bonnets, and the women the men's hats; also to shout at every other vehicle they pass, to beat each other playfully about the head with violins, and to bray defiance at any one who laughs at them at public-house doors. These impromptu carnivals of the East-end are neither gay nor attractive, but there is plenty of eating and drinking and a good deal of coarse hearty fun, such as the unsophisticated Saxon affects. It is something, too, to have been told your fortune by real gipsies, and a consolation to know that while the fair lady slights you, the dark lady looks kindly towards you, and will, moreover, eventually give you her hand, and present you with a large and flourishing family.

As early as Elizabethan times, the forest was a place where citizens disported themselves, blew off the smoke of London, came to see real trees growing, and fly their shafts in accordance with good old Roger Ascham's rules. Here they could set up their ringed targets at High Beeches, and try the long flight and the clout and rover shots, or pop away at the popinjay for cups of sack or flagons of ale;

while the dancers and skittle-players revelled at the door of the thatched country inn, where everybody could partake at the fountain-head of the special dainties of Epping and of Waltham hundred, hissing sausages, pork as white as chicken, rich mellow cream, and fresh country butter that smells of the meadow flowers. No wonder that from Elizabeth's days to those of Johnny Gilpin, "Hey for Epping upland!" has been a London holiday cry.

By-the-by, would any kind Member of Parliament some night inquire what is a royal chase, and why Epping should remain one without forest and without deer? Also, who has a right to alienate from the people the ten thousand acres of Epping and Hainault, and grant permission to build villas and rear plantations? Also, who pays the lord warden, and four verderers, and what they do for their money? The answers might be interesting to real economists who are not merely pretending to retrench.

Every Easter Monday, an unfortunate, tame, highly educated, and knowing stag used to be turned out at Epping, to be pursued by a shambling pack of aldermen, grooms, shopmen, sporting touts, and novices of all kinds. George Cruikshank caricatured the hunt, and indeed a more pitiful and ludicrous shadow of the royal sports of the Norman kings could hardly have been presented. It seemed to be a rule that no one inured to the pigskin was permitted to ride, and Osbaldeston or Assheton Smith would not have marched through Coventry with such a rabble rout of Whitechapel chivalry, for twice ten thousand pounds.

South-east of Epping, across the river Roding, stretch the once scrubby wilds of Hainault, disforested in 1851. Here, among the thorn and hazel bushes, once rose the great Fairlop oak that was blown down by a February storm in 1820. This giant patriarch, with a trunk forty-eight feet in circumference, was five centuries old. Bursting the acorn just before the death of Henry the Fifth, it had known all the storms of the Tudors and Stuarts, had outlived Queen Anne and three of the Georges, and, eventually overcome by the accession of George the Fourth, submitted to Fate the year that glorious monarch ascended the throne. An ancient fair used to be held under the great tree, the first Friday of every July. This social gathering was originated by Mr. Daniel Day, an eccentric pump and block-maker of Wapping, who, having a small estate hard by, used to annually repair to the oak's pleasant shadow and feast a party of friends on rural beans and bacon. Wishing to perpetuate the pleasure he had himself experienced under the kindly oak of Fairlop, Mr. Day bequeathed a fund to keep up the custom. The tree, from which a man-of-war could easily have been built, contributed timber to form a pulpit for St. Pancras Church, and the site of the oak is still kept in remembrance by the merry picnic parties that still make the spot their rendezvous.

It was in a cave in Epping Forest that Dick Turpin, a Whitechapel butcher by profession, hid when hard pressed on the road, circa 1730. This low rascal, who was never of "the high Toby," and not, indeed, a true highwayman at all, was the son of a farmer of Hempstead. He began by stealing cattle at Plaistow, and selling the hides at Waltham Abbey. He first joined smugglers and ran brandy in the hundreds of Essex, and then a gang of deer-stealers in Epping Forest. His first burglary with violence was at Loughton, where he and his companions stole four hundred pounds, and tortured the old woman of the house. He next broke into a house at Barking, and carried off seven hundred pounds. His men then forced the cottage of a Mr. Mason, keeper of Epping Forest, and in smashing a china punch-bowl a hoard of one hundred and twenty guineas showered down upon their heads. A reward of one hundred pounds being offered, and two of the gang seized and hung in chains, Turpin and his men betook themselves to a cave large enough to hold them and their horses, between the King's Oak and the Loughton road, in Epping Forest. The cave was in a thicket, so ambuscaded with thorn-bushes and brambles, that the rascals could observe travellers without being themselves seen.

No inn would give them shelter now, and even the pedlars carried pistols. It was near this cave that Turpin first dipped his hands in blood. A gentleman's servant and a higgler went out, armed, to try and earn the reward of one hundred pounds by taking Turpin. The thief, seeing them beating the covert, mistook them for poachers, and called out, "You'll find no hares, man, in that thicket!" "No," said the servant, presenting his gun, "but I've found a Turpin," and bade the rogue surrender. Turpin, speaking in a friendly way, gradually backed into his cave, and, seizing a loaded gun he had placed at the entrance, shot his captor dead on the spot; the higgler instantly fled. For some time Turpin skulked about the forest, but, being at last hunted by bloodhounds, he left this retreat for ever. Soon after this, while he was waiting for his wife at a public-house at Hertford, he was recognised by a butcher to whom he owed money, and had to make his escape by leaping out of a window. On his way to London with his associates, King and Potter, Turpin stopped a Mr. Major, near the Green Man, in Epping Forest, and changed horses with him. Watch being set round the Red Lion, in Whitechapel, where Turpin left the stolen horse, King was seized when he came to fetch it, and, in firing at the constable Turpin shot his friend by accident. Dick then rode into Yorkshire, and lived by stealing horses in Lincolnshire and selling them in his own neighbourhood. He was at last seized, tried, found guilty, and hanged at York in April, 1739. He talked to the hangman for half an hour, bowed carelessly to the spectators, and at last flung himself savagely from the ladder.

Waltham Abbey is too near Epping for the crow to pass it unnoticed, since it has a legend of its own that connects it with Hastings and Harold. The river Lea, that runs into the

Thames, here branches into several streams, traditionally said to be artificial channels cut by Alfred the Great in order to leave the Danish robber's fleet high and dry in the rank Essex meadows. The streams now feed powder and silk mills. Waltham belonged to Tovi, the standard-bearer of King Canute, whose son, Athelstan, proving a prodigal, squandered his money, and sold this, with other of his father's estates. Edward the Confessor bestowed Waltham on Earl Harold, his brother-in-law, the son of Godwin, who built and endowed an abbey at Waltham, giving each of the canons a manor, and the dean six. It is thought by many historians that when, on that fatal October day, Harold fell on the Sussex hill, slain by the Norman arrow, his dead body was brought to the abbey at Waltham that he had endowed. A monument — always, at least, shown as his all through the middle ages—was opened in the reign of Elizabeth, and found to contain a male skeleton. William the Norman, trampling over the grave of his dead enemy, soon laid his heavy hand upon the Essex abbey, hallowed by a Holy Crucifix from Montacute (Somersetshire). He rent from the monks' sacristies many rich chalices and jewelled robes, but left the frightened canons the right to their fat Essex meadows and the rank pastures by the river Lea. Henry the Second dissolved this foundation, the canons having grown dissolute and revelling. In 1177, on the eve of Pentecost, the king himself visited Waltham, when sixteen new canons of the Augustine order from Cirencester, Oseney, and Chichester were inducted, and the church was exempted from episcopal jurisdiction. The king then confirmed to the canons all the land given by Harold, and added Siwardston and Epping; and Richard Cœur-de-Lion afterwards added Harold's park, the village of Nassing, and several hundred acres of land. The Abbot of Waltham was one of those proud mitred barons entitled to a seat in parliament. The present church was formerly the nave of the old abbey. At the Dissolution, the revenues of Waltham Abbey were nine hundred pounds three shillings and fourpence.

The extent and limits of the port of London are closely connected with the reaches along the Essex shore. They are bounded by a straight line running from the North Foreland, in Kent, to the opposite Essex promontory, the Naze (the Nose), the said line cutting through the Gun-fleet beacon, including all within that line westward, with all the channels, streams, and tributary rivers feeding the Thames as far up as London Bridge, but excepting the known rights, liberty, and privileges, of the ports of Sandwich and Ipswich. Within the port, three Harbour Masters rule supreme: one from London Bridge to Wapping Dock Stairs; the second from Wapping to Limehouse; and the third from Limehouse to Bugsby's Hole. About a mile and a half from Leigh, near Southend, where the dull coast rises into low cliffs, there is a terminal stone marking the limit of the jurisdiction of the Conservators of the Thames.

The crow, as he flits past the low-lying Essex shore, where "the miles are long, the stiles high, and the calves good," passes many spots of legendary and historical interest. There Southend towers on its wooded hill, with its gravel strand stretching below, with the long bowsprit of a jetty looking across at the forts and dockyards. At South Benfleet the Danes were fond of landing. At Canewdon there was a Roman station, and the ruins of Hadleigh castle, close by, show traces of Roman herring-bone work. From Langdon Hills, near Stamford-le-Hope, whose church can be seen plainly from the higher slopes of Plumstead Common opposite, the windings of the Thames can be discerned for forty miles, from London to the Nore, where the river is fifteen miles wide. At Leigh, eight centuries ago famous for grapes, in the days when wine was made in England, there is an oyster fishery, founded in 1690. At Bell House, famous for its great elm trees and fine deer, Queen Elizabeth, who did not disdain to make friends of her subjects, was once entertained. Then the crow's black wings, fanned by the fresh free river air, flit past the bold cliffs of Prittlewell, where, some years ago, fishermen could see in the deep water remains of the submerged church of Milton. At Razleigh there is a Danish camp, and at Rochford stands the Hall where poor Anne Boleyn was born. At Lawless Court, close by, a curious old manorial custom still prevails, as eccentric as some of the old feudal ways of doing homage to the suzerain. A copyhold court is held on King's Hill, between midnight and cock-crow, on the first Wednesday after Michaelmas; and every tenant is fined to the amount of double his rent for each hour of absence. The minutes are made by the steward with a piece of coal, and the business is all transacted in mysterious whispers. The custom is said to have been established, as a punishment, by a lord of the manor who had discovered a conspiracy of the tenants against himself. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, this little Essex village (Rochford) gave the title to an earldom long since extinct. And now the crow presents arms, as well as he can without any, as he passes Tilbury fort, sacred to the memories of Sheridan and Queen Elizabeth. Henry the Eighth built a block house here on the site of a chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, and Charles the Second enlarged it into a full-sized fort, ready for the Dutch. Tilbury is stronger than it looks, for its inner moat is one hundred and eighty feet broad; it has two brick redoubts on the land side, and the whole district can be easily laid under water. The esplanade, mounted with cannon, is extensive, and the bastions are the largest in England. It was at Tilbury, in April, 1588, that the Earl of Leicester marshalled his twenty-two thousand pikemen and hagbuteers, and his one hundred horse, to protect London; and here the lion-hearted queen rode through the lines of the camp, and afterwards made that brave speech which showed her to be of the true metal.

A few weeks more, and the great Armada

(one hundred and fifty giant vessels, with nineteen thousand soldiers, eight thousand sailors, two hundred galley slaves, and two thousand brass cannon) set sail towards England. Not one half of the vessels ever returned to Spain. East Tilbury Church lost its tower at the south-west angle, from the battering of the Dutch vessels when they burnt our fleet in the Medway—a shame and disgrace that required much blood to wipe out. The ancient ferry was at Tilbury, and here Claudius is supposed to have crossed the Thames to follow the Britons into Kent. The old Roman road, at Higham Causeway, can still be traced. At Little Thurrock, close by Tilbury, there is a field in which are curious passages and caverns cut in the chalk. Some people call them "Dane's Holes," and think they were places of retreat; others term them Cynobelin's gold mines; while a few believe them to have been ancient British granaries. West Tilbury (twenty-four miles from London) has a church with a wooden spire, the tower having fallen from the blows of time or of Dutch cannon. St. Chad, a Saxon bishop, mentioned by the Venerable Bede, who converted the Saxons of Essex in 630, had his episcopal see here. Gathering together a flock of the servants of Christ, he taught them to observe the discipline of a regular life, as far as those rude people were then capable.

A coast of low sandy downs, trenched with water-courses, and resounding with the booms of heavy guns—that is Shoeburyness, where the great guns are tried and the armour-plates tested. There are the furrows of a Danish camp round the headland (take care of the cannon-balls), and Roman arms have been also found hard by, so Romans must have camped near where our Artillery do now. There is an old Essex tradition that under Maplin sands lies buried an ancient city. From the headland of Shoeburyness to beyond St. Osyth's Point the coast is a dreary succession of low, flat, aguish marshes, broad sandy shoals or flat swamps, and green seaweed-blackened cliffs, within the sea wall of mournful sandy plains, haunted by sea-fowl and lined by the creeks of the Blackwater. Mr. Walcott has painted a picture of this part of Essex, which is quite a bit of Ruysdael in words. "Essex," he says, "is like a large ship at anchor; there is a wild misty light in the neutral-tinted landscape; a silent repose in those wide motionless plains, dreary and spacious, ever struggling with the ocean for existence (land and sea of one colour), subject to inundations by waves, which are again constrained by man to retire, dykes, and walls, and whistling reeds, and the only sign of habitation is—

> A lonely cottage, where we see,
> Stretched far and wide, the waste enormous marsh,
> Where, from the frequent bridge,
> Like emblems of infinity,
> The trenched waters race from sky to sky."

Braintree, to which the crow next skims, was a great station for pilgrims bound, in the time of Erasmus, to the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham, in Norfolk. No doubt the ordinary professional pilgrim was rather a scurvy, thievish, lying fellow; but amongst the devout bands were people of all ranks and classes, and even Henry the Eighth, when young, plodded there barefoot from Bursham.

CHOPS.

A WELL-KNOWN writer on the art of cooking begins a treatise on broiling with a somewhat apposite parable. He supposes Antonio to have met his friend Bassanio on the Rialto, or somewhere else in the city, and in the fulness of his heart to have asked him home to dine, at Belmont Villa. Just, however, as the cab drives up to the door, it suddenly strikes him that Portia having dined with the youngsters in the nursery, at two o'clock, it is just possible that the gastronomical resources of the establishment are at a low ebb, and that a cold mutton bone is hardly the thing to put before a guest, who behaved as handsomely as Bassanio did when Antonio got into the unhappy scrape with the Jews. The first greetings over, a secret council, composed of Antonio, Portia and Nerissa, is held in the passage to consider what they can scramble together for dinner. Poor Portia is ready to cry with vexation, Nerissa calls forth her most acid expression of countenance, and at last the unhappy Antonio is petrified by hearing that it is absolutely impossible to give their guest anything for dinner but—chops. There is nothing for it, therefore, but to return to poor Bassanio, who is fidgetting hungrily on the drawing-room sofa, and murmur something in his ear to the effect that Portia is unhappily in delicate health—indeed, she never quite recovered from the fright that horrid Jew gave her, that Nerissa's temper is none of the sweetest, and that the neighbourhood is singularly ill-supplied with good butchers. So Bassanio is taken up to the best bedroom to wash his hands, the largest-wheeled hansom on the rank is brought to the door, and in twenty minutes more the two friends are comfortably seated in the cosiest box in the coffee-room of the Cock, in Fleet-street. Antonio has entirely regained his equanimity, and answers the queries of the head waiter, to whom they were both well-known in their bachelor days, by ordering — chops, the bare mention of which during the proceedings of the domestic conclave had frozen the very marrow in Antonio's bones, and curdled every drop of blood in his veins.

To a foreigner, Antonio's behaviour would have appeared in the highest degree absurdly inconsistent; but to ourselves it presents nothing either absurd or anomalous. The chop, as we all know, is the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the best and the worst of British dishes.

Who that has ever been a bachelor, or a sojourner at the sea-side, does not know the lodging-house chop—the drab, thin, leathery, tasteless, greasy morsel of flesh, fried in its own fat in a dirty frying-pan, and reminding

one by its odour of the old days at school, when the last in bed blew out the candle, to say nothing of the sprinkling of ashes it has received while it was being kept warm in front of the fire.

The domestic chop is almost as bad. If there is a good butcher in the neighbourhood, it is possibly a little thicker, and if the ruler of the kitchen insists upon the gridiron replacing the usual frying-pan, it is somewhat less greasy, but it is, notwithstanding, just as dry and insipid as its congener; it is generally nearly black in colour, except indeed where the bars of the gridiron have left light lines on its horny surface, and it is fringed with an edging of blackened fat that suggests dreadful thoughts of chimneys on fire and parish engines.

But, to pass at once from insipidity and blackness into sweetness and light; let us try and describe—or rather recal to our remembrances, for description is impossible—the numberless excellences of a properly cut and well-cooked chop, such as you get at the Cock, in Fleet-street, at Thomas's, in George-yard, or at any other first-class City tavern. It is a singular thing, and the American author of English Photographs has arrived at the same conclusion, that it is only within the realms of the Lord Mayor that the foremost dish in the whole range of British cookery is to be had in full perfection. Possibly a fairly cooked chop may now and then be found at a West-end or first-class provincial hotel, but so rarely does this happen that the exceptions in this respect prove the rule but too completely.

But to return to our perfect chop, which now lies hissing before us on its willow-patterned altar—a plump tender triangular mass of bright brown meat, defended on two sides by an impregnable rampart of bone, and on the other by a breastwork of crisp fat. At the bone end there is a soft white cylinder of delicious marrow, and behind an osseous outwork there is a titbit of juicy meat of a different flavour to the rest. Cut boldly into the middle of the victim, and watch the ruddy gravy flow out all over the plate under the gash made by the sacrificial blade. Forkful after forkful of the juicy tender meat, tempered by morsels of crisp fat and a dash of true mushroom ketchup, are consumed by the happy epicure, with interludes of white stale bread and floury potato soaked in the delicious gravy, until nothing is left but the bare bone. Now is the time for a draught of stout, while a fresh victim is being brought for immolation, and the true delights of the chop are once more tasted. Some chop-eaters load their plates with cauliflower or other vegetables, pepper, mustard, sauce, and half-a-dozen other incongruities; but the true votary knows that nothing should be eaten with a chop but stale bread, salt, mushroom ketchup, and potatoes.

But let us see if we can discover the reasons for the enormous difference between the true chop and its vile counterfeit, for which purpose we must step across the boundaries of chemical science just for one moment.

Chemists tell us, that raw meat consists principally of fibrin and certain juices holding albumen and various salts in solution. This fibrin, or solid portion of the flesh, constitutes only about one quarter of the weight of the meat, the rest being made of a watery fluid containing the albumen and salts. The liquid portion is held by the fibrin much in the same way that water is held in a sponge; but as soon as the fibrin is submitted to the action of heat, either in roasting or boiling, it contracts and squeezes out these juices, which contain not only the greater portion of the nourishment, but also the flavour of the meat. The fibrin from which the juices have been separated contains scarcely any nourishment, and is almost tasteless, as any one who has ever eaten French bouilli can readily testify. On the other hand, the cooked juices are sapid and full of flavour and nourishment.

We may now come back to the kitchen with the knowledge that in cooking a chop, the first condition of success is not to let a drop more of these doubly valuable juices escape us than is absolutely unavoidable. For this purpose our chop must be put down over a bright, clear, and somewhat fierce fire. The first thing that happens is the coagulation of a portion of the albumen on the under side of the chop, and a contraction of the fibrin which draws the juices into the centre. If we leave our chop untouched the meat will gradually harden all the way through, driving the juices before it, and causing them to overflow into the fire from the upper side. To counteract this we must consequently turn our chop over the instant the under side begins to harden. As soon as what was at first the upper side is sufficiently hard, which generally happens with a good fire in a minute or so, it is turned once more, and so on until the operation is complete. In fact, a game of battledore and shuttlecock must be played with the chop; the moment the juices have been driven into the middle of the meat it must be turned, and the turning repeated continually, so that each side may be done alike. The length of time for cooking a chop properly must depend on the fierceness of the fire and the tastes of the individual. Ten minutes and at least ten turnings may be taken as a minimum when the fire is brisk, and when an underdone chop is preferred; but there is no royal road to chop cooking, and perfection in it can only be attained by great practice and a fair amount of intelligence.

The greatest element of success is of course the chop itself. It ought to be sawn, and not cut, and should be at least an inch or an inch and a quarter thick. If it is too thin it will not contain sufficient gravy to keep the interior in a soft and tender condition, and in spite of all the care possible it will become hard and tasteless in cooking. The fat of course must be trimmed according to taste; it is a good plan where a number of chops are served up together to trim them differently, so that all tastes may be suited. If there is the slightest suspicion about their tenderness, they should be well beaten with a knife-handle or a silver

spoon, taking care not to alter their natural shape, about an hour before cooking them.

The next point to attend to is the fire, which should be rather fierce, and composed of nothing but cinders; not the slightest particle of coal smoke should be seen anywhere, and coke should be absolutely tabooed. The cook who really desires to excel in chop cooking should keep a special box for chop cinders, and should be always on the look-out for them. In the morning, for instance, before the fires are lighted, the grates should be cleared of their cinders, and all the nice, clean, round pieces, of the size of a large walnut and upwards, should be picked out and put away in the chop cinder-box. The fire should be made up with them at least three-quarters of an hour before cooking. If more than one batch of chops is required, the fire should be made pretty high in the first instance, and the top bar of the grate let down for the second batch. It is generally a dangerous thing to touch the fire during cooking; but if there is any necessity for it the poker ought never to be used, but only a few well-burnt cinders should be popped on here and there. The gridiron, which should be of iron or silver, must be kept scrupulously clean, and never used for anything else. Some cooks use enamelled gridirons, with channelled bars, to keep the fat from running into the fire; but these refinements are not at all necessary if the gridiron is placed well slanting forward, so that the fat may trickle along the bars and drop into the fire away from the chop. The chop should be turned either with two silver spoons, or else with a pair of tongs made for the purpose. The cook that would turn a chop by sticking a fork into it, and so letting out all its most delicious gravy, ought to be treated in a precisely similar manner, and then broiled over a slow fire.

Chops should be served on a dish kept hot with spirits of wine or hot water, and each guest should be provided with a hot-water plate. Comply with the proper conditions, and chop cooking ought to be as successfully carried out at the Leather Breeches, by Tom O'Donnell, at Ballyshillelagh, in the County of Cork, as at the Cock, in Fleet-street—in your own kitchen at Notting-hill as at any tavern in the City of London.

The conditions are, a thick chop; a bright, clear, fierce fire; a clean, well-tilted gridiron; a quick hand for turning, and a sharp eye that can tell when a chop is done by the change of colour on its surface—comply with them and success is certain.

One word at parting. Having achieved success, do not profane the altar on which the victim is sacrificed by incongruous adjuncts. A well-cooked chop is best honoured by a snowy table-cloth, bright plate and glass, sharp cutlery, willow-patterned crockery, white stale bread, floury potatoes, true mushroom ketchup, and the best stout to be procured for love or money. Eyes that beat the glass in brightness, and wits that distance the knives in keenness, are not wholly to be despised by the worshippers at the shrine of chop.

A BLIND MAN'S FIRESIDE.

Talk to me, oh ye eloquent flames,
Gossips and comrades fine!
Nobody knows me, poor and blind,
That sit in your merry shine.
Nobody knows me but my dog;
A friend I've never seen,
But that comes to my call, and loves me
For the sympathies between.

'Tis pleasant to hear in the cold, dark night,
Mounting higher and higher,
The crackling, chattering, sputtering, spattering
Flames in the wintry fire.
Half asleep in the corner,
I hear you prattle and snap,
And talk to me and Tiny,
That dozes in my lap.

You laugh with the merriest laughter;
You dance, you jest, you sing,
And suggest in the wintry midnight
The joys of the coming spring.
Not even the lark on the fringe of the cloud,
Nor the thrush on the hawthorn bough,
Singeth a song more pleasant to hear
Than the song you're singing now.

Your voices are all of gladness:
Ever they seem to say,
After the evening—morning!
After the night—the day!
After this mortal blindness,
A heavenly vision clear,
The soul can see when the eyes are dark;
Awake! let the light appear!

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

We have all heard in our time the nursery song of the Man in the Moon, of his fondness for claret, and of his singularity in preferring such weak drink to brandy. We have also heard of his having tumbled from the sky and asked his way to Norwich, and of a mishap which he brought upon himself in that city by his greediness. Some of us have heard, too, the supposed Talmudic legend that the Man in the Moon is the unhappy wight who was stoned to death by the Jews in the Wilderness for gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, whose spirit was imprisoned in the moon, and whose face looks down upon the earth, when the melancholy planet is at the full, to warn the nations against the sin of Sabbath-breaking. The Italians of the middle ages, as may be seen from a passage in Dante's Inferno, Canto xx., verse 124, considered the Man in the Moon to be Cain, the first murderer. The Man in the Moon was pictorially represented by our ancestors as an elderly person with a bundle of sticks on his back, a lantern in his hand, and a little dog at his side. An allusion to him in this guise occurs

twice in Shakespeare—first in the Tempest, when Stephano informs Caliban that he was the Man in the Moon, "when time was," and when Caliban replies, "I have seen thee in her, and I do adore thee. My mistress showed me thee, thy dog, and thy bush;" and, second, in Midsummer Night's Dream, where Quince says, "One must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present the person of Moonshine." At a later period than that of Shakespeare (when tobacco was, if known, unpopular, and its use infrequent), the Man in the Moon was represented with a pipe in addition to his thorns, his lantern, and his dog. In the time of the great Civil Wars and of the Restoration, and again in that of the Revolution, there are constant allusions in ballad literature to the Man in the Moon, a mysterious personage, whose real name and true whereabouts are not to be divulged. In the famous old song, "When the King shall enjoy his Own Again," the Man in the Moon is cited as the title of an astrological almanack, whose maker, or editor, was contemporary with Booker, Pond, Rivers, Swallow, Dove, and Dade—the Zadkiels and Francis Moores of the period, who for the most part predicted ill fortune to the royal cause, but who never succeeded in convincing the royalists that the star of the Stuarts was not in the ascendant, and that there would not be a restoration of the dynasty.

The Man in the Moon may wear out his shoon
In running after Charles's Wain,
But it's all to no end, for the times will not mend
Till the king shall enjoy his own again!

This chorus was sung by the convivial royalists over many a bumper of claret and Burgundy. In a still later time—after the Stuarts had "enjoyed their own again" for a brief space, after they had been tried a second time, found wanting, and been dismissed ignominiously; and when it was treason to King George the First to breathe the name of King James the Third, except to call him a Pretender—the Man in the Moon became synonymous with the royal exile, and formed the burden of many a Jacobite ditty, of which the meaning was well known to the initiated:

Brave Man o' the Moon, we hail thee!
The true heart ne'er shall fail thee!
For the day that is gone,
And the day that's our own,
Brave Man o' the Moon we hail thee!

We have seen the Bear bestride thee,
And the clouds of winter hide thee,
But the Moon is changed,
And here we are ranged;
Brave Man o' the Moon, we bide thee!

In our day, the Man in the Moon is a political character of much importance at election times in small boroughs, where the people, as a rule, are not troubled with a political conscience—at least he was so until the passing of Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill. Whether there be any Men in the Moon at the present time, I cannot say, though I suspect; or whether there be but one Man in the Moon, as there is but one Jack Ketch, I am unable to state; but I know well that I saw, spoke to, and transacted business with a real, veritable, tangible, palpable Man in the Moon, and found him an adroit, wary, excellent good fellow, and in many ways a remarkable person. I made his acquaintance in a small borough, where there was a hotly contested election between a Whig and Tory, and where both sides were determined to win—by fair means, if possible, by foul means, if necessary. I was not myself the candidate, but the friend and counsellor of the gentleman who occupied that position on the Liberal side. I need not particularly specify the borough, but shall call it, for the nonce, Great Lumpington, and say of it, generally, that it was a very expensive place to contest, and that, although *all* the electors were not corruptible, in the sense of taking actual money as a bribe from the candidate who sought their votes, they expected the said candidate to be extremely liberal in the support of their local institutions and charities, and, if elected, their member to be very diligent and influential in procuring tide-waiterships and clerkships in the Post-office, the Custom House, or the Circumlocution-office, for the incapables in their families who were not able by other means to turn an honest penny. The Liberal candidate had gained a start over the opposite party by learning for a certainty that one of the sitting members was about to be raised to the peerage, and had hastened down from London at least a week before the fact was known to any one in Great Lumpington, to feel his way among the electors. The advantage which he thus gained he maintained to the last, although a few days before the nomination he grew so nervous about his chances of success as to consult me and his legal agent on the propriety of seeing the great Mr. Potts, a man of large and peculiar experience, who was understood to know more about the management of elections, in cases of delicacy or difficulty, than any man or dozen of men in the kingdom. The result of our consultation was that I went

up to London and had a long interview with Mr. Potts, who to my surprise, knew the whole state of the case far better than I did, and who predicted, from data which he had before him, that my friend would come in at the head of the poll by a small majority, if he would not allow any bribery to be employed in his behalf. There was, however, another proviso, which did not augur so well for my friend's success, which was that the other side would be equally honest. Mr. Potts hinted, very obscurely and cautiously, and with a nervous glance towards the door, that if my friend wanted to be extra sure, and to have a triumphant majority at the close of the poll, there was but one way to accomplish the end—and that was to apply for the aid of a gentleman without a name.

"You mean the Man in the Moon?" said I.

"Remember," replied Mr. Potts to this abrupt question, "that I never mentioned the Man in the Moon. I don't know such a person—how should I? I was never in the Moon, and never saw any one who had been there, though I have had to do with lunatics in my time. A nod's as good as a wink, you know; and you say you want to win, which is quite natural. I shall send you a very able man to canvass for you, and please don't ask me any more questions."

Having returned to Great Lumpington and reported progress at head-quarters, my over-anxious friend the candidate, who had made up his mind to be elected per fas aut nefas, determined that we should send for Mr. Potts's emissary to help us at a pinch. It was to be a great secret. The candidate himself was not to speak to, or even to see, the mysterious personage when he arrived in the borough. His name was to be Jones, Robinson, Montmorency, or anything else but his real name. If he lodged at our hotel, the candidate's supporters were not to take much, if any, notice of him, unless on special occasions, and if challenged about him by the enemy, he was to be recognised only as a paid canvasser, but not as an agent, direct or indirect. As for myself, I resolved to wash my hands of him altogether, in a business point of view, whatever might be the case socially, and to do all I could to prevent my friend from bribing and corrupting the pure-minded and patriotic electors of Great Lumpington.

On the day before the nomination the Man in the Moon appeared, and called himself Mr. Tompkins, and, strangely enough, said he came from Norwich, which the nursery legend associates with the memory of the lunar personage who burnt his mouth in that city. The candidate held aloof and refused to see him; but he and the accredited legal agent of my friend had a long private interview, after which the two came to my room and had lunch. I did not know then, and never learned since, what passed between them. I only know, that, in common parlance, I took stock of the Man in the Moon, and surveyed him from top to toe with particular interest.

He was a man, I should judge, of forty or forty-five years of age, but at first glance appeared to be younger. I soon came to the conclusion that he had got himself up for the occasion, and that when at home in Norwich or elsewhere, his hair and beard were of a different colour from that which they now exhibited, if he wore such appendages as beard and moustache at all, when engaged in legitimate business, which I very much doubted. He was not a gentleman either by education or manners, and in the matter of the unfortunate letter "h," displayed a vulgarity, which the Americans, when they desire to caricature or disparage the English, proclaim to be characteristic of every Englishman high or low. He treated his h's as if they had no right to exist at the commencement of any word where the lexicographers had placed them, and when he wanted to be emphatic (or as he would have said *hemphatic*), he persisted in making them the initials of every word that ought properly to begin with a vowel. His sense and logic, however, were infinitely superior to his pronunciation and his syntax; and he would have been a very sharp practitioner indeed, who could deceive Mr. Tompkins. The result of his inquiries in the town, and of his deliberations generally with himself, after a careful inspection of the canvass books, was that there was not the slightest occasion for his services, and that the very profuse expenditure of the Liberal candidate, and the popularity he had acquired even among the Conservatives of the town, would place him at the head of the poll by a very large majority. "Had it been a majority of four or five only," said Mr. Tompkins, "there would a' been danger, lest the other side might have bought 'em all over, and put us on the wrong side of the reckoning. But

there's no fear of that; we shall win by close upon two hundred. Purity for hever! There's nothing like purity when you can stick to it without danger to your cause. And I say, purity for hever! It's the safest game to play, if you CAN play it. Petitions are hawkward things, you know; and I say, keep clear of 'em."

"You've had great experience, Mr. Tompkins, in the matter of elections? Pure, of course?"

"Of course, pure," replied the Man in the Moon. "Everything's pure until its found out to be the other thing. Yet I've known boroughs where, on the purest principles, mutton chops have become so scarce that the candidate, having a particular fancy for mutton chops, couldn't get 'em under five guineas a pound—a fact, I assure you. A particular friend of mine, who wanted a toasting fork—I don't know why he wanted such a cook maid's utensil—had to pay ten pounds for it, and the article, when he had got it, wasn't worth two-and-six. As for ribbons, I've known 'em so scarce—of a particular colour, you must recollect—that you couldn't get 'em under two guineas a yard, though, had there been no election going on, you might have bought thousands of yards at sixpence halfpenny, or less than that. And *heggs*, too. I've seen great fluctuations in the price of heggs. Once I couldn't get a hegg for my principal, who was not perhaps my principal after all, under fifty shillings. And the hegg, when it was boiled, was all but a chicken."

"But the English, according to all accounts, are a pure, honest, and incorruptible people," replied I.

"Hover the left," said the Man in the Moon. "Some of 'em are when they're well-to-do in the world and owe no man a penny. But there's few of that sort now-a-days, at least in boroughs that return members to Parliament. Perhaps there ain't any anywhere else, unless they be dukes, and I'm not sure even of them."

"Do the people who sell mutton chops and toasting forks and ribbons at these extravagant prices keep faith?"

"Yes!" he replied, slowly and deliberately. "They keep faith. There is honour among thieves; and a man who sells mutton chops for five guineas a pound is an honourable man. It's the scarcity you know. Why should he sell chops for coppers, when he can get gold? You needn't buy his chops if you don't like 'em. All's fair and above board. As for his vote, he votes as he said he would—after you have bought the chops!"

At this point of the conversation a dirty little note, sealed in coarse red wax, with the impression of a thumb upon it, was brought to me by the waiter. It was a request that I would name an early hour that day to receive a deputation from the Jolterheads. It was signed by Abraham Slugg, the chairman of a meeting of that body. I handed it to Mr. Tompkins, who read it, and said: "Have nothing to do with the Jolterheads; see them if you like; but promise them nothing. They want to be bought—ten pounds a head is their price; don't they wish they may get it? and there are fifty of them. Let 'em all go over to the other side if they like. They're of no use to us. We don't want 'em. We're going to win on the principles of purity; and if we touch such pitch as Mr. Abraham Slugg and the Jolterheads, we shall be defiled."

The Jolterheads were so called from the sign of a public-house in which they were accustomed to hold their meetings, and numbered, as the Man in the Moon had said, about fifty men. They were the "freemen," so-called, of the borough, and in close contests were, by their strict organisation as well as numbers, enabled to turn the scale in favour of either candidate. There was a tradition in the borough that during one very obstinately contested struggle, each Jolterhead received a hundred pounds for his vote; but this was in a day long anterior to the Reform Bill of 1832, and was not personally remembered even by that generally inaccurate individual, the oldest inhabitant. The price of a Jolterhead and his vote had come down to a maximum of ten pounds, but the Jolterheads, though corrupt and extortionate, were not proud, and would take what they could get, and were by no means likely to refuse half a sovereign, provided always that there was not the slightest chance of their receiving a larger sum. I was not aware of these facts, but the Man in the Moon had ferretted them out before he had been three hours in the borough, and had, no doubt, some knowledge of them before he entered it.

The Jolterheads, with Mr. Abraham Slugg, their chairman, were shown up to my room at nine o'clock on the morning of the election, and the legal agent of the Liberal candidate, as well as Mr. Tompkins, was there by appointment. Mr. Tompkins had declared war against the Jolterheads on

the sensible and very satisfactory ground that he could do without them. He recommended, however, that we should try—that is, the accredited agent and myself—to gain them over by palaver, and secure their support as we would that of any respectable and honourable elector, by persuasion. "Perhaps," he said, "if they find that nothing is to be got by dishonesty, they will be honest. Of course they'll try the other side, and may get something in that quarter; but even if they all go over, they will only diminish our majority, and not destroy it." Mr. Tompkins remained in the room "to watch the fun," as he said, but would take no part in the proceedings.

Mr. Slugg, the spokesman of the deputation, was a carpenter. He had on his Sunday clothes and his best hat, as was the case with the six other "free and independent electors" of the borough of Great Lumpington, who were ushered into the presence of the Liberal candidate's agent and his two supernumeraries, myself and Mr. Tompkins. The Man in the Moon pretended to be engrossed with a daily newspaper, but I could see that he watched the deputation from the corner of his eye, that the ponderous leading article did not interest him, and that his thoughts were on the Jolterheads, and not on the morning's news.

"Well, gentlemen," said Mr. Slugg, proceeding at once to business, "how is it to be? Are we to vote for your side or not?"

"I think you ought to vote for us, and that you will vote for us," replied the agent, "because you are Liberals, and our candidate is a Liberal. It is not likely that such free and independent gentlemen as you are should do violence to your convictions, and betray your trust to your country?"

"That's all gammon," said Mr. Slugg; "and I hope you'll excuse me for saying so. We are poor men, and we have votes, and this election can't be won without us and our votes. Put those three things together. There doesn't need much thinking to know what these things mean, when put in a string like. We are fifty-one of us, and we all go together."

"Glad to hear it," said the legal gentleman; "and I confidently reckon that you will vote like patriots—as you are—on our side."

"Patriots be blowed!" said Mr. Slugg "Business is business. Will that do?" And he handed a small shred of paper to the agent, on which were written the words, "Ten, each."

"No! it won't do. We want no man's vote who will not give it freely, and because he believes in us and our principles."

"I'll believe in you and your principles, as you call 'em, if you'll just say '*Yes*'—you know what I mean—and it'll be all right."

"Mr. Slugg and gentlemen," said the agent, "you have my answer. Good morning."

"Well," said Mr. Slugg, "this is a rum go. But we'll come back again later in the day. You can't do without us."

"We'll try, at all events. Good morning."

"Good morning," said Mr. Slugg, and the deputation withdrew.

"Useful people these on an emergency," said the Man in the Moon, as the door was shut upon the Jolterheads. "They'll come again, as they said, mark my word if they don't, unless they are bought by the other side. And you may count it as certain that they have been bought by the other side, for ten pounds a head, or five, may be, or for half-a-crown, if we see no more of them till twelve o'clock."

By twelve o'clock our candidate was in a majority of a hundred and thirty-two, and both sides looked upon this majority as decisive, and not to be reduced by any exertion or agency whatever under eighty-one, and that would allow the Jolterhead vote to be given in a lump to the opposite party. A little after twelve, Mr. Slugg and another Jolterhead presented themselves, and were received with an intimation to be brief, as we were busy.

"Have a good thumping majority," said Mr. Slugg, impressively; "have us all with you. We'll do it for——" And he handed a little shred of paper, on which was written "Two," at the same time holding up two fingers. The agent shook his head. The Man in the Moon looked on and said nothing. The refusal this time was very curt, and the deputation retired, much more crestfallen, to all appearance, than on the first interview. They appeared again at three o'clock, when the majority for our candidate amounted to one hundred and fifty-seven. The same deputation represented the interests of the Jolterheads.

"We are going to vote on the other side," said Mr. Slugg, "but don't mind being true to your colours if you'll give us a pot of beer all round."

"Not a mouthful," said the agent.

"Well," replied Mr. Slugg, "if this be electioneering I think the country's going to the devil, and I, for one, don't care about having a vote at all."

"Nor I, neither," said his companion, who looked as if he had had his beer already, and a great deal of it. "What's the good of a vote if it isn't worth so much as a bob, let alone ten pounds?"

"Go along, my good fellows," said the agent, "and don't bother any more. Be patriots for once, and vote for liberty!"

"Yes, for beer all round," said Mr. Slugg. "That's what I call liberty. As for patriots, whatever that may mean, you needn't reckon me as one. What's the good of being a patriot, if you can't even get a pint of beer by it."

There was considerable talk before Mr. Slugg and his friend retired finally. When they did, they retired swearing both audibly and awfully.

"They'll vote for us — some of them," said the Man in the Moon, "and some for the other side, and make a show of independence, of which *I* know the value. But you're not done with them quite. They'll turn up after the election's over, and the sitting member will hear of them."

Before the close of the poll our candidate's majority had been increased by thirty, which thirty, or the greater part of them, were in the opinion of the Man in the Moon, to be reckoned as Jolterheads, who had made a virtue of necessity, and voted according to their political sympathies, not altogether without the hope that they had established a "pull" upon the sitting member. The predictions of the Man in the Moon were verified. There was a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether upon the pocket of the sitting member, before he had been three months in Parliament, and the pull came, not alone from the respectable electors—not too respectable to want favours and places—but from a very large moiety of the Jolterheads. As for the Man in the Moon, he vanished, without a word of farewell to anybody; but, possibly, the successful candidate had to give him, personally or by proxy, a very handsome honorarium. And who shall say he did not deserve it? One bribe to the Jolterheads would have vitiated the election. And he had strength of mind enough (with full power, perhaps, to act in another direction) to win by purity, when he found that impurity was unnecessary. I never saw or heard of him any more; and I am quite certain that his name was not Tompkins, and that he did not come from Norwich.

SOME OTHER ODD LIVINGS.

In no city in the world is greater ingenuity exercised to gain a living than in Paris, where there is absolutely nothing wasted. Before the chiffonnier gets the chance of picking anything of the smallest value off its hundred thousand rubbish heaps, the thrifty housewife has usually put aside all that she can find a market for, and the servants have made their selection. Parisian industry, an overmoving wheel, crushes, grinds, and renews every particle of refuse which thousands of men traverse the streets day and night to collect—foul rags, half gnawed bones, broken glass, matted hair, parings and peelings of fruits, cigar ends dropped from the lips of smokers, faded flowers, dry and mouldy crusts of bread, and other more or less repulsive rubbish, are carefully collected to serve as raw materials to obscure industries, which transform and send them forth again in well nigh all their pristine freshness.

Out of this refuse, ingenious men are continually realising fortunes, and thousands of people gain their daily bread. The profit made from the mere mud scraped off the streets of Paris is something incredible; more than one individual has achieved independence by buying up the crusts and crumbs that fall from prodigal Parisian tables; others have gained competencies by collecting the pieces of squeezed lemon thrown aside by oyster eaters, or by contracting with the "restaurateurs" for their scraps; and indeed there is scarcely any kind of industry out of the mere leavings of which somebody or other does not manage to glean sufficient for a livelihood. The manufacturing jeweller, after having burnt his ashes and the sweepings of his workshop, finds a ready customer for the ashes of his ashes, among thousands anxious to turn a honest penny to make both ends meet. There is always something to be gleaned, they believe, from fields already reaped, and the wits maintain that anyone who would take the trouble might manage to live even upon the huissiers, those detested legal subordinates who live upon every one else.

A few years ago an ingenious individual on observing some chiffonniers unload their baskets, was struck by seeing the numerous pieces of bread they all turned out. On questioning them, he ascertained how these scraps were disposed of, and forthwith conceived the idea of embarking wholesale in a trade which others were content to follow retail. Without loss of time he purchased a pony and a cart, hired a large room in one of the old colleges, so numerous in certain quarters of Paris, paid a visit to the cooks of the different great scholastic establishments, and proposed to buy up all their scraps of bread. They had hitherto

been accustomed to give these to the chiffonniers, and stared incredulously when the proposition was made to them, although they were only too willing to entertain it.

Our dealer knew perfectly well what he was about, he was aware that boys are fond of wasting all the bread given to them which they cannot eat, that they fling it at one another, kick it about their playgrounds, and that stained with ink, and covered with dirt, much of it would lie soaking in a gutter or mouldering on a rubbish-heap, and he thought if, instead of undergoing these vicissitudes, all this bread were collected with care by the servants, a profitable market might be found for it. With the view of leaving no room for competition, he next made arrangements with the scullions of both the large and small restaurants, and knowing that the crust of bread was to be found everywhere, at street corners, in the kennels, and on the rubbish-heaps, he came to an understanding with a majority of the chiffonniers by offering them advantages which they could not obtain elsewhere.

When all his arrangements were complete, he established himself one morning at the markets with sacksfull of pieces of bread, and some empty baskets to serve as measures, and with a notice in front of him announcing "Crusts of bread for sale." He knew Paris thoroughly, he knew that that portion of the population which frequented the barriers had a special liking for stewed rabbit, and that Paris rabbits were reared on bread as well as cabbages. Fowls, too, he knew were fattened on bread crumbs, and other domestic animals fed with them. Our dealer in second-hand bread offered a basketful for six sous, which, being much below the price of ammunition bread, soon gained him the custom of all the little fowl and rabbit breeders of the environs. At the end of a month, on reckoning his profits, he found his idea had proved an extremely lucrative one. Every day for weeks following, he concluded fresh bargains with the tables d'hôte, the cafés, the cooks of grand houses, and the sisters of religious communities, and every month saw his profits steadily increase, until, four months after his first appearance at the markets, he had three horses and carts constantly occupied. In the course of business he was brought into contact with cooks, butchers, and "charcutiers," all fond of keeping dogs; and he gradually became initiated into the secrets of their different professions, when he learnt that all these men used considerable quantities of bread crumbs for cutlets, &c., and grated crusts for coating hams, and that they bought the former at eight sous the pint and a half. This determined him to become a manufacturer of bread crumbs, and to sell the full litre measure of a pint and three quarters for as low as six sous, which reduced price attracted nearly all the consumers to him, and in less than six months he had to procure additional horses and carts and to engage a complete staff of workpeople.

To his business of second-hand baker and manufacturer of bread crumbs, this real genius ere long added the making of "croutons"—those little lozenge-shaped crisp bits of baked bread so largely eaten in soup, and which he supplied to the grocers and small restaurants. All his proceedings, too, were regulated on such thorough economic principles, that not even the blackened crusts were wasted, but, after being reduced to a fine powder and passed through silk sieves, were mixed with honey and spirits of peppermint, and sold to the chemists and perfumers for tooth paste, which, if not particularly efficacious as a dentifrice, had the merit of being innocuous.

By the time our second-hand baker had made a moderate fortune, another purpose to which refuse bread might be even more profitably applied was discovered. This was for the manufacture of common gingerbread, most of which came from Rheims. An ingenious individual, finding that crusts of bread were being sold in the open market at such a price as precluded the idea that they could have ever emanated from a baker's shop, set to work to see whether it was not possible to reduce this bread into its pristine state for ulterior purposes. After a few experiments, he found that by submitting it to a certain heat in an oven constructed expressly for the purpose, it was possible so to harden it without burning it that he could grind it up again in a particular mill of his own invention, and so reconvert it into flour, which answered admirably for making common gingerbread. These various processes patented, their inventor became master of the cheap gingerbread trade of Paris; for he could supply a sufficiently good article at fifty per cent under all the other manufacturers, and even at a less price than ordinary bread was sold at.

Those who know the poorer quarters of Paris, are aware that there are places where a plate of meat can be obtained for a couple of sous, and a plate of vegetables for another sou, and that, lacking this amount of capital, it is possible to procure a draft of bouillon from a spout continually flowing, for just so long as you can manage to hold your breath, for a single sou. Those who prefer more solid food, and are withal of a speculative turn, can, for the same small coin, run what is called "the hazard of the fork"—that is, a single plunge of this useful instrument into a smoking caldron, with the privilege of banqueting upon whatever you may fish out, should you chance to fish out anything. If, however, you prefer the bird in the hand, and require to see your sou's worth before you part with your money, you can patronise a bijoutier (who is not a jeweller), and invest it in harlequins, which have no relation whatever to pantomime. For the harlequins of which one speaks are simply scraps of every conceivable edible substance, served up by Parisian cooks, that chance to be left by dainty feeders on the sides of their plates. Of all colours and shapes when mixed together, they present a certain resemblance to the parti-coloured garments of the citizèn of Bergamo, and hence the name by

which they have come to be known. The dealers in these delicacies have contracts with the scullions employed at the different ministries and embassies, and in all the more wealthy private households and the chief hotels, but more particularly with those engaged at the great restaurants—men who spend the best part of their lives in a species of Turkish bath at a temperature of from one hundred and forty to one hundred and eighty degrees, for a salary of five-and-twenty francs a month, on condition that all the scraps on the plates they have to wash up are their perquisites, said scraps being usually worth at least ten times the amount of their salary. Three francs the basketful is the average price they obtain for the scrapings of the platters that pass through their hands, and all of which, from truffled turkey to trotters, from ortolans to haricots, is thrown pell-mell into a common receptacle. Every morning the dealer or his agent, dragging behind him a closed cart, furnished with ventilators, visits all the establishments with which there is a contract, and basketful after basketful is flung into the vehicle, which, later in the day, deposits its contents at a particular pavilion of the Halles Centrales, set apart for the sale of cooked meats. Here each dealer sorts his nameless heap, where hors d'œuvres are mixed with the roasts, and vegetables with entremets, and where fishes' heads, scraps of cutlets, fricandeaus, and filets, half-picked drumsticks, and portions of ragouts and mayonaises are intimately blended with fragments of pastry, salads, macaroni, vegetables, cheese, and fruits; the whole being, moreover, impregnated with at least twenty different sauces. All that is recognisable in this conglomeration is carefully put on one side, cleaned, trimmed, and placed on plates. Out of regard for the stomachs of their customers, the bijoutiers perform this delicate operation of sorting in private, and it is only when all is finished, the discordant pieces duly assimilated, and the harlequins arranged in little piles, with the titbits—or jewels, as they are termed—temptingly displayed in front, that the public are invited to inspect and purchase.

Many poor people and working men engaged in the neighbourhood of the markets, prefer these high-seasoned delicacies to a plainer style of living, and the consequence is that by one o'clock in the day every dealer in harlequins is nearly certain to be cleared out. All that is rejected during the sorting is sold as food for pet dogs, for whose special benefit certain bijoutiers convert these dregs into a succulent sort of paste, which is much sought after by fussy old ladies, the plethoric habit of whose Italian greyhounds evince the high kind of living in which they are indulged. The bones, which have been preserved with care, are sold to the manufacturers of soup cakes, and, after the gelatine has been extracted from them, they are disposed of to the manufacturers of animal black. That the trade in harlequins is a good one, is evident from the fact that there are numerous retired bijoutiers in Paris, who have amassed incomes of from ten to twelve thousand francs a year after a few years' successful trade.

If the calling of bijoutier is a profitable one, that of "zesteuse" would appear to be hardly less so, as the reader will presently see. Some years ago, a certain Madame Vanard was left a widow at the interesting age of eighteen. Her husband, a practical chemist, who had established a little distillery at which he extracted essences for perfumers and pastrycooks, killed himself through overwork. During the few happy months he and his young bride passed together, the latter, while watching her husband at his employment, had learnt some of the rudiments of chemical science, and was able to replace him at his alembics at such times as he was obliged to be absent. When he died, desiring to carry on his business, and remembering his having one day remarked to her that an intelligent man might make his fortune out of the orange and lemon peel thrown away in Paris, she determined to see if she could not put the suggestion he had shadowed forth into practice.

With this view she went one day, basket on arm, into the Rue Montorgeuil, where the oyster market was then held, and where there were numerous restaurants, at which these bivalves were the staple article of consumption, and where—as the Parisian, even to the working man, invariably eats lemon juice with his oysters—the remains of squeezed lemons naturally abounded. On the hundreds of rubbish heaps, where one chiffonnier after another had already reaped a harvest, she prepared to seek hers. The garçons of the neighbouring restaurants and cafés, observing a young and pretty woman come regularly every morning to search where so many others had searched before, inquired of her what she was in quest of, and, on being told, promised to put the precious peel on one side for her.

Her next course was to find the people who swept out the audience portion of the Paris theatres, and to prevail on them, for a small consideration, to save for her the orange peel with which the floors were strewn. She then engaged washers and sorters, whom she set to work in a large room, round which horizontal wicker hurdles, piled up with scraps of orange and lemon peel, were arranged, reaching from the floor almost to the ceiling. In the centre of the apartment was a long table, at which a score or more of laughing, chattering girls would be busily engaged in "zesting"—that is, in removing the extreme outside portion of the peel, with which men and boys proceeded to fill bags and boxes. After being weighed and done up in packets, this peel was dispersed, not only all over Paris again, but throughout France, and even abroad, where it was transformed into Dutch curaçoa, essence and syrup of lemon, orangeade, lemonade, &c. Such is the business which made the fortune of a charming woman, and which, spite of its having spread of late years into a multiplicity of hands, is still a profitable calling.

Another widow, older and not so pretty, or so elegant, or so intelligent, and, consequently, not by any means so interesting as Madame Vanard, made a fortune for herself out of what everybody else looked upon as rubbish. She was concierge at a house in the Rue du Temple, occupied almost exclusively by manufacturing goldsmiths, and, one very severe winter, was possessed with the economical idea of burning, in an old caldron that served her for a stove, all the sweepings of the house. The plan answered remarkably well, for she found what she had hitherto regarded as so much mere dust became, when mixed with turf and coal, an excellent combustible. Warmer weather having set in, the old lady went about the usual spring cleaning up of her place, and, on clearing out the old caldron, was surprised to see some hard glittering substance soldered, as it were, to the bottom of the utensil. On closer examination it proved to be gold; the old lady had unwittingly discovered the philosopher's stone, which so many have sought in vain. Keeping her secret so far as she was able, she proceeded to rent on lease the sweeping of the staircases in all the neighbouring houses occupied by goldsmiths—paying to do that which people ordinarily pay to have done. With the profits resulting from this speculation she bought several large plots of ground in the outskirts of Paris, on which she built theatrical-looking Swiss villages, and sold her châlets one by one to small tradesmen of bucolic tastes, who spend their Sundays there, fancying the adjacent Montmartre and the more distant Mont Valerien to be peaks of some neighbouring Alpine chain.

One can understand a fortune being made out of an imperishable substance like gold, but can hardly conceive an independence being realised out of faded flowers, and yet this was done by an intelligent Parisian, who, at his wit's end for the means to live, thus reasoned to himself one day: Those expensive bouquets, of which one sees such an abundance every morning at the "Marché aux fleurs," must be constantly flung aside by the beauties to whom they have been presented, a long while before the flowers are really dead, and as a matter of course find their way to the rubbish heaps before their proper time. Early in the morning in the fashionable quarters of Paris these heaps are strewn with flowers still blooming. "Now," said our intelligent Parisian to himself, "if I were to go or send round early and pick up all these flowers, and could only succeed in finding out a way of reviving them, if merely for a short time, I might make a little fortune." He was not long in finding out all he wanted, whereupon he hired a small isolated house near the 'Barrière Montparnasse, and engaged a number of poor people to collect the flowers from off the rubbish heaps before the chiffonniers went their rounds and soiled them by turning all the refuse over; the flowers once in his house, this is how he set to work.

A number of women undid the different bouquets, sorted the flowers, cut off the ends of all the stalks, which they afterwards dipped into water almost boiling, thereby causing the sap to mount into the flowers, and rendering them as brilliant as though they were gathered that morning. The flowers were then mounted upon rush stems, arranged in bouquets and surrounded with fresh green leaves, and all was done. To get rid of the bouquets a band of little girls were hired, who cleanly and tidily dressed, and with small baskets upon their arms containing the day's stock, and bunches of flowers in their hands, pestered the passers-by along the boulevards, who to get rid of their importunities generally made purchases. So well organised was the entire affair, that upwards of a thousand pounds a year was realised by our intelligent Parisian.

Much in the same way as it occurred to this individual that it might be practicable to utilise the castaway bouquets of Parisian belles, others were struck with the possibility of turning to account the ends of cigars already smoked. Still the calling, which is pursued in Paris to a great extent, is not a particularly profitable one, as any poor devil can scour the boulevards and the outsides of the more frequented cafés, and pick up a share of the cigar ends that fall from the lips of more than a hundred thousand smokers. After chopping these ends up small the collector can make up little packets of tobacco, and sell to a working man four times as much tobacco for a sou as he could purchase at a tobacconist's for the same money. The ends of the superior cigars he will sell to the cigarette manufacturers for a couple of francs and upwards per pound. Hundreds of men out of work pursue this calling in Paris, where nearly half a million of cigars are smoked every day, and the majority of them in the open air.

The chiffonnier is too well known to need description here; besides, to do him justice would require a small volume. Still there is one branch of the profession of the "chiffe" very little known, and on which a few words may be said. This is the "trieur," or sorter, who is charged with classifying the contents of all the baskets of the working chiffonniers, which the "ogres," who carry on "chiffonnerie" on a grand scale, purchase for a stated price. As soon as these various baskets are emptied into the sorting shed, the "trieurs," male and female, set to work to separate this mass of filth and rubbish, to winnow, in fact, the grain from the chaff. Thus all the white rags are put on one side to be sold to the paper-makers, all the coloured and silk ones to the "unravellers," the paper to the cardboard manufacturers, the bones, according to their size, to the ivory turners, the button-makers, or the refiners, the old iron, copper, zinc, and lead to the blacksmiths and founders, the old leather to the furbishers up of old boots and shoes, the hair to the coiffeurs, the wool to the mattress-makers, and all fatty substances to the soap and candle manufacturers. These "trieurs" ordinarily work twelve hours a-day in a pestiferous atmosphere, which is at times so charged with noxious exhalations as to put out the very lamps they use.

Quite distinct from the chiffonnier, though of the same type, is the "ravageur," who rakes all the gutters that intersect the Paris pavements, with a piece of wood at one end of which is a sort of iron crook, with the view of fishing out any scraps of iron or copper, boot or other nails, or stray coins, that may chance to have fallen into these receptacles. The class, however, is far from a numerous one, and since open gutters at the sides and in the centre of the roadways have been for the most part done away with, is gradually becoming extinct.

The very mud one scrapes from off one's feet is turned in Paris to profitable account. In London, contractors are paid to cleanse the streets, and how indifferently they too often fulfil the duty we all of us know; whereas in Paris they pay six hundred thousand francs (twenty-four thousand pounds) a-year for the privilege of keeping the city clean, and do their work admirably. The mud and other refuse which they cart away is deposited in the "pourrissiers" (rotting places) at Argenteuil, a few miles from Paris, and is eventually sold as manure to the thousands of suburban market-gardeners at from three to five francs the cubic mètre of thirty-nine inches—two and a half millions of francs worth being thus disposed of annually.

The scavengers of Paris are a class by themselves. In the whole of the eighty brigades, of which they are composed, not a single real Frenchman is to be found. The prefect's lancers, as the gamins of the capital delight to style them, are all either Germans, or Alsatians, who are Germans in everything but nationality and name. Between three and four o'clock every morning they may be encountered descending upon Paris from the high ground at La Villette, or spreading over the city from the neighbourhood of the Place Maubert, each with a broom or shovel on his or her shoulders, for men and women are employed indiscriminately. Clothed in ragged garments, which are frequently soaked through by the rain, spite of the oilskin cape with which many of them are provided, the men yet wear a smart glazed cap with a brass plate in front, showing that, although paid by the contractors, they are still the servants of the municipality. The women all wear coarse stuff or woollen dresses, and have coloured handkerchiefs on their heads, falling in a long point behind, and fluttering with every breath of wind. To protect themselves from the cold, both men and women wear enormous gloves and gigantic sabots, or thick hobnailed shoes, stuffed full of straw, which some of them twist over their blue woollen stockings, half way up their legs, to serve as boots.

These sweepers, who must be under five-and-thirty years of age when engaged, are about one thousand six hundred in number. The eighty brigades into which they are formed give four brigades to each of the twenty arrondissements of Paris. Work commences punctually at four o'clock, and those not present at the roll-call lose their day's pay, which is at the rate of fourpence per hour for the time they happen to be engaged, which is, on an average, from four to five hours daily. The contractors pay them their wages, and the city of Paris provides them with their shovels and brooms. Each brigade of sweepers has its inspector, who, without a particle of pity for the fatigue which he has himself formerly undergone, sees that every one under him performs his or her share of labour. Above the corps of inspectors come the sub-controller, the controller, the director, and finally the chief engineer of the city.

The houses in the Rues de Meaux and de Puebla, where the great bulk of the Paris street-sweepers reside, are sufficiently dismal looking. In their large and dirty courtyards swarms of children are generally playing in the mud, rags of many colours are hanging from all the windows, and, stowed in the corners of the dark, damp passages, which emit a sickening odour of cabbage and fried bacon, are heaps of worn-out brooms. Most of the men are pale, scrofulous, and stupid-looking, and all the women resemble each other; the old seem never to have been young, and the young appear already old. Not a dog, nor a cat, nor a bird even is to be seen, which is easily accounted for, as these animals cost something to keep, and produce nothing in return, which would not suit people of such thrifty habits as the Paris sweepers, who, out of the shilling or eighteenpence a day which they earn, invariably manage to save sufficient to enable them to return after a time to their native place, there to settle down for the remainder of their days in comparative independence.

One of the most ingenious of small Parisian industries is that of the "riboui," or maker of what is known as the "dix-huit," which is an old shoe become new again, hence its appellation of "dix-huit" (eighteen) or "deux fois neuf," which every one knows signifies both "twice new" and "twice nine." These shoes are made of old vamps, to which old soles turned inside out are added, plenty of cobbler's wax and numerous large nails being used to conceal the cheat. As a general rule they fall to pieces after a week's wear.

By far the most unscrupulous picker up of what most people regard as unconsidered trifles is unquestionably the "échantillonneur," or collector of samples, who has satisfactorily solved the problem that has perplexed all the economists, of how to live while producing nothing and consuming a good deal. His mode of proceeding is simple enough. He preys on all he can, and consumes or sells all he gets. On one pretence or another—a large foreign or colonial order, a municipal or other contract, a private connexion among the wealthy classes—he collects samples of every conceivable thing from all the manufacturers and wholesale dealers he can prevail on to trust him, and these he eats, drinks, wears, uses, and sells according to circumstances. Of course he uses up a certain number of firms every week; still Paris is a large city, and the directory furnishes a never-

ending supply; besides which there are the provinces to work upon. Of course he gives the preference to new establishments desirous of pushing business, as they respond more liberally and with less hesitation to his verbal and written applications.

MORE OF WILLS AND WILL MAKING.

THE PANTON CASE.

THE will, true to its character, seems to beget strange and exceptional spasms of inconsistency; in its mysterious presence men will delight to belie their own whole life, or steady course of love and affections. The annals of wills show that there is no security in a long course of love on one side, or of devotion on the other, between parent and child, husband or wife. The word "will" is suggestive; and, with a sort of devilish freak, all is reversed of a sudden, and at the moment of discovery the faithful and loving child finds herself defrauded and cast out.

In the year 1838, a most respectable Welsh gentleman, "Thomas Williams, Esq., of Bryncross Castle, near Carnarvon," was placed in the dock at the Central Criminal Court, charged with forging the will of his father-in-law, Mr. Panton, a wealthy Welsh proprietor. It was a most suspicious transaction, and when the case against the prisoner closed, no one in court could have a doubt of his guilt, as, indeed, no one could who reads through the next few paragraphs.

At a castle in Wales, near Carnarvon, there was living, in the year 1837, a wealthy old gentleman named Mr. Jones Panton. He was possessed of large estates, and many shares and stocks, and his son, Mr. Barton Panton, was high sheriff of the county. Knowing as we do the monotonous nomenclature of Wales, it is scarcely a surprise to learn that the son was married to the daughter of a Williams, or that another Williams had married a sister of the high sheriff. Both the gentlemen bearing that name were local solicitors, and some awkward circumstances made the marriage of Miss Lauretta Panton singularly unfortunate. When the wealthy owner of the castle found himself obliged to bring some charge concerning a diamond ring against his own son-in-law, no one could have been surprised to learn that a complete alienation had taken place between those branches of the family. But it naturally turned to the profit of the son, who had behaved as became him, and it was accepted that the unlucky business of the diamond ring had entirely cut off Lauretta and her solicitor husband from all chances of inheritance. And this seemed reasonable, for the theory that those need pardon who have done the wrong would, of course, be fortified in the case of one armed with the powers of a testator.

The position of the son was, besides, a strong one. From the day he left his cradle, to use his own words, to the death of his father, there was the most unbounded affection between them. When the son married, the father stipulated that both wife and son should come and live with him. He talked to other people of this attachment, and was known to dote upon his little grandchild. In due course of time he had prepared wills. In an early one, he had divided his property between his son and daughter; but after the diamond ring affair he had cut the latter off with a miserable two hundred pounds. In May, 1837, he pointed his wishes still more emphatically, and on one occasion, when his last sickness was on him, and in presence of an intimate friend, he handed over to his son, with great solemnity, a bundle which he said was *his will*, adding a sort of proclamation: "I give you all the money I have got in the house, with the arrears of rent now due, my canal shares, stocks, plate, books, pictures, wines, and farming stock." During the fortnight's illness that followed, the old gentleman received his medicines only from the hands of his son and daughter-in-law; and on the 24th of May he died. At the funeral it was noticed that the disinherited solicitor arrived very late; and, indeed, bearing in mind his old disagreeable associations with the deceased, any alacrity of attendance at the obsequies was scarcely to be expected. All the relatives and friends then assembled at the castle to hear the document read, which was to make Mr. Barton Panton the heir. This was a sort of local custom, but here, again, it was remarked that the solicitor of "diamond ring" notoriety, just as the recital was about to commence, left the room abruptly. This embarrassed the new owner, who, with some courtesy, put off the reading to another occasion. The behaviour of the solicitor grew more and more mysterious. He drove up one morning in his carriage, and asked his brother-in-law if he had any communication to make to him. It must have been a disagreeable surprise for the latter, though a solution of this doubtful conduct, when, having duly proved his will in all form, the solicitor came hesitatingly to the front, and, announcing that he was in possession of a later will, proceeded to enter a caveat. This faltering was suspicious in the extreme, but when the document itself was produced, these suspicions became very grave indeed. By this document the solicitor was named executor, the disinherited Lauretta residuary legatee. The body of the instrument was written in the solicitor's handwriting, and, though the signature was admittedly genuine, a close examination with strong glasses discovered some highly suspicious matters. Underneath the writing were pencil-marks, imperfectly rubbed out, of plans and names of streets, and the name "Hurlock" was distinctly made out. It was then recollected that some one of that name had been co-tenant with the deceased of some property in London, and that the solicitor had negotiated the matter; further, the witnesses were his own man, since dead, and his two maid-servants. Taking the whole circumstances together, no reasonable man could doubt but that this had very much the air of a clumsy forgery and a more clumsy plot.

Mr. Williams, the well-known solicitor, was placed in the dock with his two maid-servants to stand their trial. It lasted five days, and threw the whole neighbourhood into a fever of excitement. The prosecution seemed to make the case yet more conclusive. A respectable gentleman, collector of the district, proved emphatically that on the 7th of May—the date of the forged will, he had scarcely quitted the side of the testator a moment. Various servants of the household swore that the solicitor had not been near the house on that day. Indeed, taking the whole case for the prosecution together, and recalling the awkward diamond ring incident, the reasonable dislike of the deceased, the affection for the son, and the strange behaviour of the accused, the Welsh jury could hardly have hesitated, and the present jury of readers must heartily endorse such a view. Yet the prisoner seems to have been innocent, and was triumphantly acquitted!

Even during the course of the prosecution, a fact or two had dropped out that seemed to point in the same direction. The old testator had been heard to speak affectionately of his absent daughter Lauretta, uttering a wish that he could leave her two thousand pounds instead of two hundred; but when the defence was opened, the obscurities began to clear away. Nothing could be more convincing. A brother clergyman stated solemnly that the old man had expressed a wish to him to make the solicitor his executor, because he was sure he would take care of his poor daughter. He had repeated this remark to the prisoner, on whom it seemed to come as no surprise; it was by his advice, he explained, that the prisoner had studiously kept back the will; through fear, it would seem, that the scandal and awkwardness that would follow from two being produced together. Then appeared a coachman, who, in the most explicit terms, swore not only to the driving of his master to the castle on the day when the last will was executed, but that they had met the prosecutor and a friend coming away from the castle. Finally, the two attesting witnesses, the maid-servants, were brought up, and in that satisfactory way which is so hard to describe, but which carries conviction to the minds of judge, jury, lawyers, and perhaps a crowd, detailed the whole circumstance of the execution of the will, and the result was the breaking-down of the charge, and acquittal of the prisoner. A curious feature in this case is the perfect surprise; for, as was before noticed, when the prosecution had closed, the conviction seemed a certain and foregone conclusion; and the jury might have turned round, as the phrase runs, in their box, though equity would of course have coerced them barely to tolerate a hopeless defence. The outraged solicitor, who, indeed, could not have had solicitor's flesh and blood had he acted otherwise, at once brought his action for a malicious prosecution; and the judge tried, by anticipation, to check any eagerness of the jury in his favour, by warning them that they must consider whether the prosecutor had not most reasonable inducement to act as he did. They found a verdict for three hundred pounds damages.

Sir Bernard Burke, in the latest edition of his agreeable Vicissitudes, has touched on some of those oddities of the more remarkable will-makers. One instance given by him shows in what a freak, and at the same time what a vicious freak, the will-maker can indulge himself, solely to convey the idea of his power. He thinks if he should allow his property to go in the regular course that he makes no figure; but, with a stroke of his pen to give away an estate, that is a sort of omnipotence. Thus the last Earl of Harcourt, when settling his affairs, did not think of charity or hospital, but turned to some old chronicle, where he found that his ancestors had broken away from the old French tree of Harcourt, about seven hundred years before. The English sapling would grow no more; and he deliberately sought out the influential Marquis D'Harcourt, in France, seeking a most substantial bond to reunite the two houses, separated since the twelfth century. The French nobleman must have been amazed to hear that he had been selected as heir to a noble estate at Windsor, with a bonus of some eighty thousand pounds to buy an addition.

THE BRIDGEWATER CASE.

Will making furnishes us with yet another reflection, namely, that gigantic disposers of property, with the best professional aid that money can procure, miscarry in their intentions much more frequently than less ambitious distributors. It may be that the great booty to be disposed of causes an excess of care and precaution, or that its very size invites a contest. It is to be considered also that the man who has "made his money," the millionnaire, is inclined to become lofty, and arrogant almost, in forecasting the future. As *he* has done so much alive, he wishes to project his behests into the future, and after his death, direct very despotically what he has earned so hardly. Hence he is betrayed into mistakes, and the courts seem to take pleasure in passing a slight on the impotent efforts of one who, they think, ought to have now done with the world. The Thellusson case was a good instance of this checkmating; and the Bridgewater arrangement, after drifting about among the boulders and rocks of law, had very nearly been broken up.

The well-known Duke of Bridgewater, who, with such noble perseverance and energy, assisted also by the genius of Brindley, made his canal, lived to reap his reward in a splendid income. This was supposed to amount to nearly one hundred thousand a year, and at the least, to seventy or eighty thousand. As the duke grew old there were many speculations as to who was chosen as the fortunate heir, and it was believed that one had recommended himself to the duke, and been selected for the happy distinction. This was Sir Tatton Sykes. Sir B. Burke mentions how this gentleman lost the prospect of such good fortune; and

certainly since the beginning of the world no one ever paid so dearly for a simple ejaculation of impatience. The baronet was coming home one night, attended by a groom of the duke's, and fell into one of the duke's dykes. As he was helped out, after a thorough ducking, he said impatiently "D—n these canals," or, as solicitors write, words to that effect. The groom reported the incautious burst, and the duke, resenting an insult to what was the hobby of his life, struck the utterer out of his will.

The dukedom, however, disappeared, and a lesser Marquis of Bridgewater inherited, but to the Marquis there was no one of the name to succeed, and this fine and honourably-won estate, whose value was estimated at nearly two millions, seemed likely to ramble in the loose lineage of distant collaterals, chosen perhaps arbitrarily, rather than enjoy the steady and more magnificent descent of hereditary succession.

In this extremity the owner resolved to make an effort to create, if he could not find. He accordingly made an arrangement by which all this vast property was to pass to the Lord Alford of the time, then a mere child; but on this strict condition, that if within five years after his becoming Earl of Brownlow, he did not succeed in obtaining the rank of Marquis or Duke of Bridgewater, the estates were to pass from him to a younger brother. The latter, also, was allowed the same mystic time, to make the same attempt, and in case of failure incurred the same forfeiture. In 1849, Lord Alford succeeded to the estates, and in about two years later died without having become Lord Brownlow, and, of course, without having entered on the term of probation. Then arose some very nice law points. To whom were the estates to pass? To Lord Alford's infant son? No, it was urged this would utterly deprive the brother of his chance of the reversion. To the brother? No. For the deceased had not entered on his term of probation, and had therefore not forfeited it. This part of the case turned on the point, whether there was a condition precedent, as it is called, and is purely technical. So it may be laid aside here; but a greater question loomed behind, and about it the real battle was fought. A great nightmare for courts and ancient judges, is any act or theory bearing "against public policy," which is certain to invest the question with an awful and preternatural horror. Thus any well-meant check by a parent upon his children's marriage, though otherwise harmless enough, is at once blighted by the anathema "against public policy."

The great cause—for it became a great one—lumbered upwards, in the usual way, through the various courts, halting before the vice-chancellor. The arguments on this point are excessively ingenious, and quite intelligible to the unprofessional hearer. It was urged that as an impossibilty is always void, it was here impossible that any man should by his own act become a marquis or a duke. But it was replied that this would be true if the party were called upon to *create* any one earl or marquis, which would be an impossibility. It was then objected that there was here a hint of corruption, and that it was extremely improbable that within a limited term of five years a man should have done public services, or found opportunity for them exactly proportioned to such a splendid reward. But then there was quoted, in reply, the well-known family arrangement of bequeathing a living to a son if he should enter holy orders. The vice-chancellor, on the whole, took the public policy side, and pronounced the arrangement void. The cause, of course, drifted past him contemptuously, and was drawn by legal tugs into the House of Lords. It was precisely a question to bring out most dramatically the tone and temper of those remarkable men, Lyndhurst, Brougham, St. Leonard's, Truro. All spoke with warmth, as on a great constitutional question. Lord Brougham put it very happily. He gave the testator credit, no doubt, for meaning that this title was to be won by honourable means; but, supposing he had been asked whether he imagined that a dukedom was to be obtained merely by an exemplary life, he would naturally think he was being turned into ridicule. The real danger, he said, would be the temptation to try and influence those who acted for the crown, not in the shape of coarse, naked bribery; but there were many ways of reaching the same end. Lord Truro took the same line, and Lord St. Leonard's, with very great heat, denounced it as an insult and indignity to the crown, for, he acutely added, the subject pointed out a particular title and rank which he required to be obtained. In a sort of constitutional tremor, which recals the old disrespectful speaking of the Equator, he said it was a fearful issue, and one from which he recoiled.

All these strong and influential opinions being against this arrangement, the careless outsider would naturally suppose they were equally against the interest of the person they most nearly affected. If the conditions were void by which Lord Alford was to benefit, his prospects were also void. But not so. There is a wonderful and erratic uncertainty in the ways of the law. These adverse opinions operated against the testator merely. The Lords, as it were, took up the will, and drew their pen across the obnoxious clause, and then returned it to the young lord. He, therefore, possibly to his own surprise, received his vast estates, discharged from this inconvenient condition, and without having his conscience burdened with any sins against public policy or the sovereign's prerogative.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER II. RIDING AT ANCHOR.

THE intention, one of the first which Marian Creswell had expressed after her marriage, and one which had so incensed Gertrude, of converting the girls' music-room into a boudoir, had long since been carried out. Almost immediately after he had returned from his wedding trip, Mr. Creswell had sent to London for decorators and upholsterers. An army of foreign artists, much given to beard and panto-mimical gesture, to humming scraps of operas over their work, and to furtively smoking cigarettes in the shrubberies whenever they could evade the stern eye of the overseer, had arrived upon the scene; and when they returned to town they left the music-room, which had been a bleak, gaunt, cheerless apartment enough, a miracle of brightness and cosiness, elegance and comfort. Everybody was astonished at the change, and the young ladies themselves were compelled to confess that the boudoir, as it then appeared, was perfectly charming, and that really, perhaps, after all, Mrs. Creswell might have been actuated, apart from mere malevolence and spite, by some sense and appreciation of the capabilities of the room in the selection she had made. There was a good deal of actual truth in this judgment; Marian had determined to take the earliest opportunity of asserting herself against the girls and letting them know the superiority of her position; she had also intended, if ever she were able, to gratify the wish to have a room of her own, where she might be absolute mistress, surrounded by her books, pictures, and other belongings; and by the acquisition of the music-room she was able to accomplish both these intentions. Moreover the windows of the music-room looked out towards Helmingham. Half-way towards the dim distance stood the old school-house, where she had been born, where all her childhood had been spent, and where she had been comparatively innocent and unworldly; for though the worship of wealth had probably been innate in her, and had grown with her growth and strengthened with her strength, she had not then sacrificed others to her own avarice, nor forfeited her self-respect for the gratification of her overwhelming passion. In a person differently constituted, the constant contemplation of such views might have had an irritating or a depressing effect, but Marian's strength of mind rendered her independent of any such feeling. She never thought with regret of the step she had taken; she never had the remotest twinge of conscience as to the manner in which she had behaved to Walter Joyce; she was frequently in the habit of passing all the circumstances in review in her mind, and invariably came to the conclusion that she had acted wisely, and that, were she placed in a similar position again, she should do exactly the same. No; she was able to think over all the passages of her first and only love—that love which she had deliberately cast from the pedestal of her heart, and trampled under foot—without an extra pulsation of excitement or regret. She would pass hour after hour in gazing from her window on distant places where, far removed from the chance of intrusion by the prying villagers—who, however, were profoundly ignorant of what was going on—she would have stolen interviews with her lover, listening to his fond words, and experiencing a kind of pleasure such as

she had hitherto thought nothing but the acquisition of money could create. Very tranquilly she thought of the bygone time, and looked across the landscape at the well-known places. She had slipped so easily into her present position, and settled herself so firmly there, that she could scarcely believe there had been a time when she had been poor and dependent, when she had been unable to exercise her every whim and fancy, and when she had been without an elderly grey-haired gentleman in constant attendance upon her, and eager to anticipate her very slightest wish.

One afternoon, about eight months after her mother's death, Marian was sitting at the window of her boudoir, gazing vacantly at the landscape before her. She did not see the trees, erst so glorious in their russet garments, now half-stripped and shivering in the bitter autumnal wind that came booming over the distant hills, and moaned wearily over the plain; she did not see the little stream that lately flashed so merrily in the summer sunlight, but had now become a brown and swollen foaming torrent, roaring where it had softly sung, and bursting over its broad banks instead of coyly slipping through its pebbly shallows; she did not see the birds now skimming over the surface of the ground, now rising, but with no lofty flight, the harbingers of coming storm; she did not see the dun clouds banking up to windward; nor did she note any of the outward characteristics of the scene. She was feeling dull and bored, and it was a relief when she heard the handle of the door turned, and, looking round, saw her husband in the room.

There was nothing of palpable uxoriousness—that most unpleasant of displayed qualities, especially in elderly people—in the manner in which Mr. Creswell advanced and, bending over his wife, took her face in his hands and kissed her cheek; nor in the way in which he sat down beside her and passed his hands over her shining hair; nor in the words of tenderness with which he addressed her. All was relieved by a touch of dignity, by an evidence of earnest sincerity, and the veriest cynic and scoffer at the domesticity and what Charles Lamb called the "behaviour of married people," would have found nothing to ridicule in the undisguised love and admiration of the old man for his young wife, so quietly were they exhibited.

"What made you fly away in that hurry from the library just now, darling?" said he. "You just peeped in, and were off again, never heeding my calling to you to remain."

"I had no notion you were engaged, or that anybody was here!" said Marian.

"I am never engaged when you want me, and there is never anybody here whose business is of equal importance with your pleasure."

"When did you cultivate the art of saying pretty things?" asked Marian, smiling. "Is it a recent acquisition, or one of old standing, which had only rusted from disuse?"

"I never had occasion to try whether I possessed the power until you came to me," said Mr. Creswell, with an old-fashioned bow. "There, oddly enough, I was talking about speaking in public, and the trick of pleasing people by public speaking, to those two men when you looked into the room."

"Indeed. Who were your visitors?"

"I thought you would have recognised old Croke, of Brocksopp; he seemed a little hurt at your running away without speaking to him; but I put him right. The other gentleman has corresponded with you, but never seen you before—Mr. Gould, of London. You wrote to him just after poor Tom's death, you recollect, about that sale."

"I recollect perfectly," said Marian. (She remembered in an instant Joyce's allusion to the man in his first memorable letter.) "But what brought him here at this time? There is no question of the sale now?"

"No, dearest; but Mr. Gould has a very large practice as a parliamentary agent and lawyer, and he has come down here about the election."

"The election? I thought that was all put off!"

"Put off?" repeated Mr. Creswell. "Indefinitely? For ever?"

"I'm sure you told me so."

"Now that is so like a woman! The idea of an election being quietly put aside in that way! No, child, no; it was postponed merely; it is expected to come off very shortly."

"And what have these two men to do with it?"

"These two men, as you call them, have a great deal to do with it. Mr. Croke is a leading man amongst the Conservative party—that is my party, you understand, child—in Brocksopp, and Mr. Gould is to

be my London agent, having Mr. Teesdale, whom you know, as his lieutenant, on the spot."

"You speak of 'my party,' and 'my agent,' as though you had fully made up your mind to go in for the election. Is it so?"

"I had promised to do so," said Mr. Creswell, again with the old-fashioned bow, "before you did me the honour to accept the position which you so worthily fill; and I fear, even had you objected, that I should scarcely have been able to retract. But when I mentioned it to you, you said nothing to lead me to believe that you did object."

"Nor do I in the very smallest degree. On the contrary, I think it most advisable and most important. What are your chances of success?"

"Well, on the whole, good; though it struck me that our friends who have just gone were a little too sanguine, and—at least, so far as Mr. Croke was concerned—a little too much disposed to underrate the strength of the enemy."

"The enemy? Ah!—I forgot. Who is our opponent?" Mr. Creswell heard the change in the pronoun, and was delighted.

"A certain young Mr. Bokenham, son of an old friend and contemporary of mine, who was launched in life about the same time that I was, and seemed to progress step by step with me. I am the younger man by some years, I believe; but," continued the old gentleman, with an odd, half-sheepish look, "it seems curious to find myself running a tilt with Tommy Bokenham, who was not born when I was a grown man!"

"The position is one with which age has very little to do," said Marian, with a slight hardening of her voice. "No, if anything, I should imagine that a man of experience and knowledge of the world had a better chance than a young and necessarily unformed man, such as Mr. Bokenham. You say that your friends seemed confident?"

"A little too confident. Old Croke is a Tory to the backbone, and will not believe in the possibility of a Liberal being returned for the borough; and Mr. Gould seems to depend very much on the local reports which he has had from men of the Croke stamp, and which are all of the most roseate hue."

"Over-certainty is the almost infallible precursor of failure. And we must not fail in this matter. Don't you think you yourself had better look into it more closely than you have done?"

"My darling one, you give me an interest in the matter which previously it never possessed to me! I will turn my attention to it at once, go into the details as a matter of business, and take care that, if winning is possible, we shall win. No trouble or expense shall be spared about it, child, you may depend; though what has given you this sudden start I cannot imagine. I should have thought that the ambition of being a member's wife was one which had never entered your head."

"My head is always ready to serve as a receptacle for schemes for my husband's advancement, whether they be of my own, or his, or other people's prompting," said Marian, demurely. And the old gentleman bent over her again, and kissed her on the forehead.

What was this sudden interest in these election proceedings on Marian's part, and whence did it arise? Was it mere verbiage, pleasant talk to flatter her husband, showing feigned excitement about his prospects to hide the real carelessness and insouciance which she could not choose but feel? Was she tired of his perpetual presence in waiting upon her, and did she long to be rid of her patient slave, untiring both in eye and ear in attention to her wants, almost before they were expressed? There are many women who weary very speedily of suit and service perpetually paid them, who sicken of compliments and attentions, as the pastry-cooks' boys are said to do, after the unrestricted gratification of their tart-appetites, in the early days of their apprenticeship. Did she talk at random with the mere idea of making things pleasant to her husband, and with the knowledge that the mere fact of any expression of interest on her part in any action of his would be more than appreciated? Not one whit. Marian never talked at random, and knew her power sufficiently to be aware that there was no need for the expression of any forced feeling where Mr. Creswell was concerned. The fact was—and it was not the first time she had acknowledged it to herself, though she had never before seen her way clearly to effect any alteration—the fact was that she was bored out of her life. The golden apples of the Hesperides, gained after so much trouble, so much lulling of the dragon of conscience, had a smack of the Dead Sea fruit in them, after all! The money had been obtained, and the position had been

compassed, it was true; but what were they? What good had she gathered from the money, beyond the fact of the mere material comforts of house, and dress, and equipage? What was the position, but that of wife of the leading man in the very narrow circle in which she had always lived? She was the centre of the circle, truly; but the circle itself had not enlarged. The elegant carriage, and the champing horses, and the obsequious servants were gratifying in their way; but there was but little satisfaction in thinking that the sight of her enjoyment of them was confined to Jack Forman, sunning himself at the ale-house door, and vacantly doffing his cap as homage to her as she swept by, or to the villagers amongst whom she had been reared, who ran to their doors as they heard the rumbling of the wheels, and returned to their back parlours, envying her her state, it is true, but congratulating themselves with the recollection of the ultimate fate of Dives in the parable, and assuring each other that the difference of sex would have no material effect on the great result. Dull, cruelly dull, that was all she could make of it, look at it how she would. To people of their social status society in that neighbourhood was infinitely more limited than to those in lower grades. An occasional visit from, and an occasional dinner with, Sir Thomas and Lady Churchill at the Park, or some of the richer and more influential Brocksopp commercial magnates, comprised all their attempts at society. The rector of Helmingham was a studious man, who cared little for heavy dinner parties, and a proud man, who would accept no hospitality which he could not return in an equal way; and as for Dr. Osborne, he had been remarkably sparing of his visits to Woolgreaves since his passage of arms with Mrs. Creswell. When he did call he invariably addressed himself to Mr. Creswell, and did not in the least attempt to conceal that his feelings had been wounded by Marian in a manner which no lapse of time could heal.

No! the fact was there! the money had been gained, but what it had brought was utterly insufficient to Marian's requirements. The evil passion of ambition, which had always been dormant in her, overpowered by the evil passion of avarice, began, now that the cravings of its sister vice were appeased, to clamour aloud and make itself heard. What good to a savage is the possession of the gem of purest ray serene, when by his comrades a bit of glass or tinsel would be equally prized and appreciated? What good was the possession of wealth among the inhabitants of Helmingham and Brocksopp, by whom the Churchills of the Park were held in far greater honour, as being—a statement which, though religiously believed, was utterly devoid of foundation—of the "raal owd stock?" The notion of her husband's election to parliament gave Marian new hopes, and new ideas. Unconsciously throughout her life she had lived upon excitement, and she required it still. In what she had imagined were merely humdrum days in the bygone times she had had her excitement of plotting and scheming how to make both ends meet, and of dreaming of the possible riches; then she had her love affair, and there had flashed into her mind the great idea of her life, the intention of establishing herself as mistress of Woolgreaves. All these things were now played out; the riches had come, the old love was buried beneath them, the position was attained. But the necessity for excitement remained, and there was a chance for gratifying it. Marian was pining for society. What was the use of her being clever, as she had always been considered, if the candle of her talent were always to be hidden under the Brocksopp bushel? She longed to mix with clever people, amongst whom she would be able to hold her own by her natural gifts, and more than her own by her wealth. To be known in the London world, with the entry into it which her husband's position would secure to her, and then to distinguish herself there, that was the new excitement which Marian Creswell craved, and day by day she recurred to the subject of the election, and discussed its details with her husband, delighting him with the interest which she showed in the scheme, and by the shrewd practical common sense which she brought to bear upon it.

Meanwhile the relations existing between Mrs. Creswell and her recently acquired connexions, Maud and Gertrude, had not been placed on any more satisfactory footing. They lived together under an armed truce rather than a state of peace, seeing as little of each other as possible, Marian ignoring the girls in every possible way, except when they were perforce brought under her notice, and the girls studiously acting without reference to any supposed wishes or ideas of Mrs. Creswell's. Mr. Creswell followed his wife's lead exactly; he was so entirely wrapped up in her and

her doings that he had no eye nor ear for any one else, and he would probably have been very much astonished if he had been told that a complete estrangement had taken place between him and the other members of his family, and would positively have denied it. Such, however, was the case. The girls, beyond seeing their uncle at meals, were left entirely to their own devices, and it was, under the circumstances, fortunate for their future that their past training had been such as it had been. Gertrude, indeed, was perfectly happy; for although Mr. Benthall had not actually proposed to her, there was a tacit understanding of engagement between them. He occasionally visited at Woolgreaves, and during the summer they had met frequently at various garden parties in the neighbourhood. And Maud was as quiet and earnest and self-contained as ever, busied in her work, delighting in her music, and, oddly enough, having one thing in common with Mrs. Creswell—an interest in the forthcoming election, of which she had heard from Mr. Benthall, who was a violent politician of the Liberal school.

One day the girls were sitting in the room which had been assigned to them on the establishment of the boudoir, and which was a huge, lofty, and by no means uncomfortable room, rendered additionally bright and cheerful by Gertrude's tasty handiwork and clever arrangement. It was one of those close warm days which come upon us suddenly sometimes, when the autumn has been deepening into winter, and the reign of fires has commenced. The sun had been shining with much of his old summer power, and the girls had been enjoying its warmth, and had let the fire out, and left the door open, and had just suspended their occupations—Maud had been copying music, and Gertrude letter-writing—owing to the want of light, and were chatting previous to the summons of the dressing-bell.

"Where is madam, this afternoon, Maud?" asked Gertrude, after a little silence.

"Shut up in the library with uncle and Mr. Gould, that man who comes from London about the election. I heard uncle send for her!"

"Lor, now, how odd!" said unsophisticated Gertrude; "she seems all of a sudden to have taken great interest in this election thing!"

"Naturally enough, Gerty," said Maud. "Mrs. Creswell is one of the most ambitious women in the world, and this 'election thing,' as you call it, is to do her more good and gain her higher position than she ever dreamed of until she heard of it."

"What a curious girl you are, Maud! How you do think of things! What makes you think that?"

"Think it—I'm sure of it. I've noticed the difference in her manner, and the way in which she has thrown herself into this question more than any other since her marriage, and brought all her brains—and she has plenty—to uncle's help—poor, dear uncle!"

"Ah, poor, dear uncle! Do you think madam really cares for him?"

"Cares for him? Yes, as a stepping-stone for herself, as a means to the end she requires!"

"Ah, Maud, how dreadful! but you know what I mean—do you think she loves him—you know?"

"My dear Gerty, Marian Ashurst never loved anybody but one, and——"

"Ah, I know who you mean, that man who kept the school—no, not kept the school, was usher to Mr. Ashurst. Mr.—Joyce. That was it! She was fond of him, wasn't she?"

"She was engaged to him, if the report we heard was true, but as to fond of him! The only person Marian Ashurst ever cared for was—Marian Ashurst! Who's there?"

A figure glided past the open door, dimly seen in the waning light. But there was no response, and Gertrude's remark of "Only one of the servants" was almost drowned in the clanging summons of the dinner-bell.

VILLAGE LIFE IN BENGAL.

Our Bengalee village is almost as quiet in the hot weather as the water of the river on whose bank it is situated. Time was when it was the channel of a stream of commerce as mighty as the torrent which swells the river in the rains. Then, the road on which it stands was the highway for goods passing down the country to the great port of Calcutta. Now they are sent by an iron road which passes at a distance from our streets. The inhabitants seem to live in an eternal hot weather of fortune. Like their own paddy-fields, when shorn of their crops, they have a dry, poor, parched-up appearance. The large buildings, ghauts, temples, and houses are tumbling to decay; luxury has fled the spot; cleanliness dwells only with the poor. And, truly, in spite of its mud walls and thatched roof, an Indian hut is one of the cleanest habitations that you could discover in a journey round the world. The

materials used in its construction could not be brought to a higher state of polish. Look at the smoothness of its clean floor. There is not a grain of dirt on it. It looks as bright and smells as fresh, as the floor which an English housemaid has just scrubbed. In yonder corner stands the cause of this immaculate purity A broom, a mere bunch of finely-split bamboo, without handle, the common jarun, every Indian housewife's daily companion.

But the interior of the hut gives other evidence of the vicinity of the presiding genius of the broom. For see how neatly she has ranged her pots and earthen vessels on the floor against the wall. Some are elevated on a wooden shelf. On removing the saucer, or piece of cloth laid on the mouth of each jar to preserve its contents from the dust, and also from the rats and vagabond dogs of the village, we discover, in some, various kinds of grain; in some, oil or ghee; in one or two, a few of the good woman's trinkets—for even Hindu women have trinkets. In many cases their whole fortune is laid out, not in shares or doubtful securities, or in the Three per Cents, but in jewellery, ornaments, and gold or silver robes. The whole interest of a Bengalee woman's heart and soul, be she rich or poor, centres in her wardrobe. Jewels and dresses are her ambition, the subject of all her talk. Her gossip sparkles with them. They clothe all her ideas. Her thoughts are heavy with the weight of the ornaments they have to carry.

The household lamp stands in yonder niche in the wall. It is a common earthen saucer, or bati, containing oil, with a lip in which reposes a piece of cotton. The receptacle in which it is placed, resembling a niche in one of our cathedrals, appears to have been made for the figure of an idol. Our host's bedroom furniture is all contained in one article, a bed. This bed, or charpoy, is made of stout string lashed to an oblong frame of wood, supported on legs of about a foot in height, and affords a very cool and easy couch.

The possessor of all this wealth, the respected occupier of the neat dwelling, is a tiller of the soil, as appears from the two or three implements of husbandry which are hung on the beams of the roof. A rough plough, as rude as when Adam first turned ploughman, a short-handled hoe, and a sickle, comprise his stock in trade. Yet most probably he is a tiller of his own soil, a landed proprietor, his estate covering perhaps half an acre.

An Indian hut possesses a most offensive and disagreeable exterior. The back-yard generally contains what may be called a mud dust-bin, a receptacle for all sorts of filth and rubbish, a place never covered over and scarcely ever cleansed. On one side of the house—we are now at the entrance of the village where the houses are a little scattered—is a pool of liquid death and abomination, or a mass of rank vegetation, concealing within its leaves noisome fevers and awful agues; or a dried-up tank, its sides slippery with slimy plants, its bottom covered with heaps of rubbish, dead animals, and all foul and obscene matters. On the outside of the hut, or around the tank, there is perchance a clump of trees, perhaps plaintain trees, or palm trees, starting up from a thick impenetrable jungle, the shelter of many a deadly snake, and often the half-way house of a leopard out for the day. The sides of the cottage are stuck all over with dark patches, which, at first sight, one is apt to consider as a national species of ornament, but which, on a closer inspection, one perceives, as well through the sense of smell as through that of sight, to be cakes of prepared cow-dung, placed there in a wet state to bake in the heat of the sun for subsequent use as fuel. In the early morning, scarce a fire is alight in the village, but towards evening you will be able to judge of the application and effects of this abominable preparation. Then, as you return from your evening walk, and make a short cut through the narrow streets to your house, you become sensible of a gradually increasing thickness in the atmosphere; a smell as of a stale dunghill becomes more and more evident to your nostrils; your lungs become by degrees slower and slower in their working, your breath more and more heavy; a smarting in your eyes, slight at first, grows more and more intense. From every door, every crevice, between every straw that composes the thatch of every house, from every narrow passage and confined alley, from every hole, corner, nook, or cranny, from every open space, square, court-yard, or thoroughfare, steals a thick, impenetrable, heavy, peaty smoke. A smoke that no well-bred senses could endure. A smoke that, slowly rising from the fires which the villagers are now lighting with these vile brown cakes, gradually envelopes the whole village, temples, houses, and trees, in one thick, dark, odorous, blinding canopy. A smoke that fairly smokes you out, and makes you run, with the fear of suffocation, for dear life, till you have left the village and its nocturnal covering far behind.

In the early morning the air is fresh, pure, and clear; the rays of the sun give a genial, not too intense, warmth, and everything is sparkling with life and activity. The village has been astir for some two hours, and as we pass on towards the bazaar we are amused with the bustle of the preparations on all sides for the business or pleasures of the day. A great deal has been written about "the Indian maiden, who, with her pitcher poised on her head, advances with all the modesty of maidenhood, yet with the dignity of a queen, to the village well; grace beaming forth in every movement of her upright and well-defined form," &c.; but an Indian maiden at a distance, with her ghurra, or water-pot, on her head, looks like a walking pillar; while on a closer view, her garments generally prove to be very dirty, and too scanty, or, if ample enough, too lazily put on. However, here are several specimens for you to judge from, in all degrees of undress, cleanliness, and proximity; for the whole population of the village is occupied in performing its morning toilette, and men and

women exhibit various degrees of progress in that absorbing ceremony.

Numbers pass us, men and women, singly or in groups, going to, or returning from, the river. The women, some with their clothes still dripping on their shoulders, some with naked infants toddling by their sides or carried astride on one hip, all with their long black hair wet and hanging down their backs. In the low verandahs of many houses on either side of the street, we see men at their toilette. Some, squatted on the ground, are studiously consulting a looking-glass, and doing up their hair for the day, with as much care and precision as an English lady bestows on her own auburn locks. Some, whose religion allows them to retain but a scant amount of hair, having soon completed their hair-dressing, are chatting with their friends, exchanging greetings with those of the passers-by whom they happen to know, or passing round from mouth to mouth the morning hubble-bubble. In one verandah, the village barber is shaving his customer's hair according to the peculiar articles of his religion, producing an effect which inclines one to believe that he has placed a cup on the top of his patient's head, and shaved off all his hair but that covered by the vessel.

If you look down the street, you may see a crowd collected round a gentleman, who, from the cut of his coat, and the want of cut in his hair, which comes a considerable way down his shoulders, appears to be "the missionary." It is he, and the crowd are listening attentively and respectfully to his matutinal discourse. He preaches there in the same spot every morning, and is always honoured with a considerable and intelligent audience.

In another minute we reach the ghat, or landing-place. The steps leading down to the river are crowded. People are busily ascending and descending. Old men and women, lads, lasses and children, are all collected here. All ages of both sexes are taking their morning bath, exchanging greetings, holding a lively gossip, or carrying on a gentle flirtation as they take a dip and come up to the surface again. When they have brought their business and their pleasure to a satisfactory conclusion, the women fill their ghurras (which during their ablutions they have left to float about on their own account), raise them on their heads, or carry them supported by one arm against their sides, and make their way slowly home. This is the Hindu woman's meeting-place. The ghat is her rendezvous, her Rotten-row, her promenade; and the early morning is the fashionable hour. In another hour the ghat will be deserted. The morning toilette, at least that part of it which is performed at the river, will be completed; the gossip and latest news will be exhausted; the day's supply of water will have been fetched; and the groups will have broken up.

Even at this distance from the bazaar you can hear the hum and bustle of trade, the discordant street cries, and the shouts of eager bargainers. A "native" never speaks in a moderate tone of voice, unless he has mixed much with English people. Every word he utters is delivered with the full voice and dramatic pitch of an orator. This is the bazaar, corresponding to the High-street of an English country town. It is a narrow street, with scarcely sufficient room for two of the country carts or hackeries to pass each other, thronged with natives, and lined on either side with low houses, in the verandahs of which, on a level with the road, are displayed the various goods for sale. Many a shop appears to be a pedlar's box on a large scale, exhibiting a multifarious assortment of those trinkets and gewgaws so prized and admired by our country-folk. Or it might be a stall in a fair, for its contents are formed of small looking-glasses, tin-cups, money-boxes, glass, jewellery, plates for good boys, penny trumpets, moving dolls, and a jumble of childish trumpery. At the cloth merchant's, or linendraper's, you may purchase fabrics from every loom in Europe, but you will find an extremely limited stock of Indian goods. The village shoemaker's productions bear a very brown-papery appearance; and the confectioner's pastries and sweetmeats might be set before any English schoolboy without much fear of his being tempted to indulge his appetite to an injurious extent. The fruiterer shows but a small and very uninviting selection of fruits. Bunches of plaintains and bananas, heaps of cocoa-nuts, a few insipid vegetables, and bags of dried peaches, figs, almonds, and raisins. Numberless are the grain merchants, their many-coloured seeds spread out in heaps or stored in earthen jars. Butchers, poulterers, and dairymen have no existence in our bazaars; they reside in the more sequestered hamlets, away from the bustle of the town, and have no regular establishment, retaining their stock in the raw state of nature, until required for the spit or the pot. Jewellers, and gold and silversmiths, though they have shops in the bazaar, make no display of their goods; but keep their bracelets, brooches, and other ornaments carefully packed in tin boxes ranged by their side as they sit at work. The hubbub and confused noise of the street is distracting. Naked, pot-bellied children are running about, shouting and playing, or, squatted on the ground, are amusing themselves in the manufacture of that world-wide production, a mud-pie. Several goats are straying up and down, jocosely butting at interfering passengers, or returning the caresses of old friends. The thoroughfare is too crowded to be the ordinary resort of Pariah dogs; but there are one or two specimens of that degraded race sneaking down the street, casting a wary glance on either side to avoid the missile which they momentarily expect, and which, when it reaches them, they receive with a howl and a quickened flight. Offensive alike to the eye and the ear is the Pariah dog. He is a sneaking, mean-spirited animal, with a coat and a snout like those of the jackal, and with a language evidently borrowed from, if not a dialect of, that employed by his untamed relation. His infernal howl or snarl corrupts the tongue of any Anglo-

Indian dog, however thorough-bred, after a short residence in the country, and changes his full-mouthed aristocratic bark into a quick sharp snarl, or a squeaky whine. Yet he deserves pity, for his lot is a hard one, and after a life of abuse and misery, he generally ends his days in starvation. Flies swarm on all sides. Their chief resort is the pastrycook's, but they range from store to store, from store to animal, from animal to man, in a perpetual dance to their own monotonous music. The natives do not seem to mind them, and allow them to remain on their bodies without attempting to brush them off. At the upper windows, or on the roofs of the houses, are women engaged in household duties. Purchasers and sellers on all sides seem trying to drown one another's voices, in the eagerness of their bargaining. Endless are the lies they indulge in, and wonderful is the coolness with which they contradict themselves. They live in an atmosphere of deceit and over-reaching, and a lie is to them more natural than the truth. In buying, the rule is never to give more than two-thirds of the price demanded. The heaps of mud and rubbish collected at the side of the road are awaiting removal in the scavenger's cart. For our village boasts a municipal committee. And yonder is the dustman going his morning rounds with his neat little cart, in the shafts of which is yoked—a mighty proof of the advance of English influence—the sacred white Brahmin bull. Here is the tobacconist's. He himself is seated among his wares, proving their virtue and recommending their adoption to all passers-by who are inclined to believe the evidence of their own eyes, by smoking his morning pipe. Strings of hubble-bubbles, and a few hookahs, the latter of various degrees of elegance and taste, adorn his shop. Every mouth in the village knows the taste of a hubble-bubble. Men and women all smoke; children of four or five years old, and of both sexes, know how to draw the vapour through the hole of the cocoa-nut, and can puff it out of their mouths with the meditative calmness of an old smoker. Thus we reach the end of the bazaar. And not too soon, for at its further end an excited Brahmin bull, as yet a stranger to our municipal dust-cart, and still rejoicing in the freedom of his sanctity, is beginning to run a muck down the crowded thoroughfare. Tossing up his heels and standing on his head, as though he were going to perform a succession of summersaults all down the street, away he goes, helter-skelter, into the confectioner's, smashing all his vessels, and reducing his elegantly devised pastries into a shapeless mass; while the unfortunate shopkeeper, not daring to lift his hand against the sacred animal, views the havoc with dread and submission, scarce raising his voice to drive the frolicsome creature away. But away he soon goes, not caring to surfeit on sugar and flour, and plunges his head into the first grain merchant's he reaches. Here he is in a few minutes secured by some of the most adventurous of the sufferers, and led away to be let loose in the fields outside the village.

Some of the houses in the street we have now entered, are built of brick. The side they present to the road, with its bare, blank face, pierced only at a great height from the ground by a few very small windows, gives but an unfavourable impression of internal comfort; we enter the narrow wooden doorway, and find ourselves in a large, open court-yard. This court-yard is surrounded by a verandah, behind which are several rooms, like dens for wild beasts, to judge from their barred windows and padlocked doors. Above the verandah are two or three stories of rooms, both better ventilated and more accessible to the light and air. The pillars of the verandah, the frames of the windows, the walls, perhaps even the court-yard itself, are decorated with various designs in bright and gaudy colours. The rooms contain, with the exception of a few extra beds and boxes, no more furniture than the ploughman's hut, though, perchance, the abode of a man who owns half the village.

Another of the brick houses standing in this street, and presenting an exterior in all respects similar, is a temple, wherein rites more mysterious than edifying are continually being performed. We pause for a minute within the doorway; wondering at the hideous idols; at the dim lights; at the gaudy colouring of the massive pillars which support the roof; at the lofty and wide flight of steps ascending to the shrine; at the atmosphere heavy with incense; at the heathenish, ignorant pictures; at the chanting of the priests, sounding like the buzzing of bagpipes; until we turn, and with a feeling of relief pass into the pure cool air of the street. At the corner is another temple: not a mysterious incense-filled chamber, but an open shrine, where all passengers can see and worship their chosen God, in the shape of some hideous idol, surrounded by floral offerings.

During the middle of the day, and in the early part of the afternoon, the streets are at their quietest. Even natives avoid going out in the heat of the sun, as much as possible. Trade is now less active. Indeed, with the few shops situated in this thoroughfare it has altogether ceased. The drowsy influence of the heat, and the quiet of the hour, have so affected yonder confectioner, that a Pariah dog has caught up one of his patties, and is scampering away with it as fast as his legs can carry him. But our banker, that sharp wide-awake man of business, is by no means under the influence of the weather, or of anything else but his own interests, which somehow advance by a rule of "double interest," a peculiar theorem, not found in the works of any ancient or modern arithmetician. He is ready for business, and looks so hungrily and eagerly after our pockets, as he squats on his mat in the verandah of his house, with his ledgers, certain red-covered books, his tin-boxes, and his large iron-bound heavily-padlocked chest or safe, that we hurry past him as if he were an ogre. Another shopkeeper who has chosen this quiet spot in preference to the noisy bazaar, is the village bookseller, who, a learned-looking man with specta-

cles on nose, is so absorbed in the study of one of his own books, that he notices us not as we approach and linger for a moment at his stall. It contains an endless assortment of paper and cloth-covered publications. The leaves of some are open, so as to exhibit the pictures; some bear illustrations on their covers; representations of Hindu gods, and of events in the Hindu mythology.

The charpoy is an article of as frequent use by day as it is by night. Its offices are various, while its shape is beautifully simple. A bed by night, it is a couch by day. It is the common settee of the family. When an Englishman would offer his visitor a chair, a Hindu would offer him a seat on his charpoy. At this time of day the diurnal use of the charpoy is very visible. In one verandah, a naked little urchin, who grins at us as we pass, is making it his play-ground. In another, a woman is seated on it, nursing a child. In a third, a gentleman, who apparently "lives at home at ease," and has no business, stretched at his full length on the homely couch, is enjoying his midday siesta.

The creaking we hear in many of the huts proceeds, as we may learn by peeping in through any open door, from an oil or corn mill, which a miserable lean cow is working, dragging the heavy groaning machine round and round after her, in a ceaseless circle; while instances of housewives grinding corn in the ordinary and well-known method, between two flat stones, are seen in many a verandah and court-yard.

Our village enjoys but a short twilight. About forty minutes of day remain after the sun sinks beneath the horizon. So, about an hour or two before that time our village again puts on a bustling air. Trade grows active again; ploughmen throng the streets, driving their cattle home; women go to fill their pitchers at the river or the tanks; people take their evening stroll. Troops of children, shouting and laughing, just let loose from the village school, chase one another up and down the streets; or, forming in procession, march about the village to the music of their own voices. Others, in some open space, get up a game not unlike that known to English schoolboys as "rounders." Scholars from the government academy, embryo bankers' clerks, or merchants' clerks, salute us on their way home with "Good morning, sir!" Thereby supposing that they have done as England does, and that the only thing required to complete their metamorphosis into a thoroughbred sahib is an English suit of clothes. Now, the magistrate's and the police superintendent's cutcherries close, and send forth, to swell the evening crowd, numbers of loud-talking clamorous suitors, who, whether successful or unsuccessful, seem equally elated in being in some way brought under the notice of government. Now, the good housewife, broom in hand, sets her house in order against her husband's return from plough or desk. The ghat, which was in the morning the most fashionable spot, is, in the evening, not honoured with so good an attendance. Not many women are about at this hour.

Our walk through the village to-day has been but little noticed. The apathetic character of the native, and his absorption in his own business, cause him, except on occasions of idleness or of great interest—when he can be offensively curious—to be entirely indifferent to the actions of any other persons, although that other person's skin be of a different colour to his own. So we have neither been hooted, nor pelted, nor followed by gazing crowds; indeed, with the exception of some bashful maidens, who, more from affectation and a desire to be noticed, as evinced by their slyly peeping at and smiling on us, than from any real feeling of modesty, covered their heads while we passed them, no one has given us more attention than that contained in the casual glance which is bestowed on every passer-by.

By degrees, as night draws on, signs of the approach of that time of rest which the whole world alike acknowledges and enjoys are seen in the extended forms which appear in the verandahs of the various huts. The Hindu's chief meal is now eaten, and the vast dish of rice which composes it, is so disproportionate to the capacity of his stomach, that he becomes the victim of his own prosperity, and a prey to all the pangs of dyspepsia. So, to ease his burdened frame, he reclines his limbs, and in ruminative quiet and under the influence of his soothing hubble-bubble, gets rid of the unpleasant effect of his evening meal.

Dim oil lamps are but poor assistants to trade, and after struggling for a dull hour or so, the shops are one by one shut up, and the streets become dark and quiet. Quiet, but for the cries of the nightly watchman, answered from all quarters by his companions, and echoed by the howling of the village dogs and the distant jackals.

SECOND-CLASS VIRTUES.

We are not, as a rule, perfect, but most of us regret our shortcomings. When we do what is wrong we are usually sorry afterwards that we cannot undo it, or, at any rate, we respect those who are better, firmer, and more moral than ourselves. I believe this preference of good to evil to be innate, natural, not the artificial product of civilisation, or based upon selfish expediency; for we find it amongst the most thoughtless savages. Even Sir Samuel Baker, who takes quite a pessimist view of the wild African, and seems inclined, in one chapter, to deny him the bare power of comprehending gratitude, honesty, or truth, with that frankness which adds so much both to the interest and value of his writings, tells, in the next, of traits in the characters of individual "natives" which seem to upset his theory.

But though we all admire virtue as a whole, we have by no means an equal respect for all the virtues. Now, there is generosity; every-

one considers that to be a first-class virtue; we will pardon almost any shortcoming in other respects to a generous man, while of economy we have but a poor opinion. The free-handed liberal fellow, who spends what he has to-day, and never looks forward to to-morrow, who runs in debt, borrows money of his friends, and leaves his widow and children unprovided for at his death, we respect, admire, and love; our tongues may blame him, but our hearts yearn towards him; while it is but a cold and grudging approbation we afford to his frugal neighbour who lives within his small means, never buys anything without thinking whether he can do without it, travels second class, prefers omnibuses to cabs and walking to either, pays his bills quarterly, is independent of everybody, gives his own children a fair chance in the world, and very likely assists those of his noble-hearted, open-handed acquaintance. And yet the practice of economy requires the exercise of an immense amount of resolution, self-denial, and integrity, qualities which all hold estimable. The fact is, that a careful attention to the pence is apt to become exaggerated, till the virtue of thrift degenerates into the vice of parsimony, and, as meanness is an unsocial, while extravagance is a genial, vice, it is natural enough that we should esteem generosity, which is apparently related to the latter, beyond economy, which seems more connected with the former. A philanthropist, who has a thousand a year, and lives on three hundred, in order to have seven hundred to spend in charity, may get any amount of credit from the outer world, but his neighbours and relatives are sure to think him mean and stingy. For it is an odd fact, that we judge of a man's generosity more by what he spends on himself than by what he spends on others, and nothing goes down with society like the rollicking selfishness of a man who shares with his friends the plunder of his tradesmen.

Humility is another second-class virtue. Of course, as Christians, we are obliged to rank it very high, in theory, but practically we do not think much of it. A capital quality for servants and dependants of all kinds, no doubt, and perhaps for our equals, so far as their relations with ourselves are concerned. It fact, we like humility principally because it does not offend our own pride.

Sobriety is another minor virtue. We are constantly told that this is a sober age, so I suppose it must be so. We likewise (which is a curious result) see around us a vast amount of crime, disease, and misery resulting from drunken habits. And not only among the working classes. What middle-aged man is there who has been to a public school, or to college, or in the army or navy, or resided long in London, who could not name old friends who have come to utter grief through tippling? And yet the most sober of us have a charity for intemperance which we deny to other vices, and by no means plume ourselves much on our abstinence. I fancy that this tenderness for intoxication arises very much from the pretty things poets have written about it. Messieurs the poets are likewise responsible in a great measure for masculine morality being held as a second-class virtue. We have improved a little bit, thanks, perhaps, to Wordsworth and Tennyson, and, if Pitt were alive now, no comic paper would lampoon him because he was not a debauché; but I fear that young men are not yet particularly anxious to be thought moral.

But I don't wish to pick at the motes in other folks' eyes without confessing to a beam in my own. Moral courage is the virtue which I cannot for the life of me appreciate properly. No doubt it is most estimable, most noble, even heroic, but I am afflicted with a sort of colour blindness with respect to it, and if I meet a man who possesses it in any extraordinary degree, it is ten to one that I mistake him either for a shameless impostor, a thick-skinned blockhead, or a prig. I am not quite sure, alas! that I quite know what the virtue is. Of course everybody can understand that it is noble for a man to do what he knows to be right, in spite of any amount of contumely he may bring upon himself. But if I am correct in supposing that the possession of moral courage would enable him to do so without *caring* for that contumely, I should not sympathise with it at all; on the contrary, the more he suffered the more I should admire him, if once convinced that he was acting from a conscientious motive; which in the case of a man running a muck amongst the feelings and opinions of his friends and contemporaries, I am always too ready to doubt. It is so rare in these days for any one to be unable to follow his own bent without a fuss, that one is naturally suspicious, on hearing of a case of persecution, that the martyr may have courted the opportunity of putting his moral courage to the proof. For, to my distorted vision, moral courage looks very much like indifference to public opinion, and though that may in a few rare instances help a man to be virtuous, it certainly removes one of the strongest impediments to his being vicious. Parents and tutors know best, perhaps, but it always sets my teeth on edge to hear them holding forth to boys upon the merits of learning to say No—as if they were heiresses—and not minding being laughed at. Some thirty years ago there was a book with enticing covers, which set forth how one James Proper used to rebuke those schoolfellows who incited him to trespass out of bounds and commit other breaches of discipline. The finger of scorn was pointed at James, but he wrapped himself up in his virtue and cared not; indeed, he rather liked being made a martyr of. Well, I always used to long to kick James Proper, and almost fear that age has not deprived me of that yearning. Why, what would be the use of sending a boy who was covered with this impenetrable hide of moral courage to school at all? Surely the desecration of classic authors and the manufacture of nonsense verses are but insignificant items of education compared with the training

which a lad receives by being thrown into a little world of superiors, equals, and inferiors, where his good points are encouraged by the consideration which they bring him, and ridicule teaches him to suppress or conceal his weak ones. But how is he to be broken of meanness, physical timidity, uncleanliness, untruthfulness, and a host of small vices which, unchecked, will render him an odious man—if he does not mind being jeered at?

The man who can stand upon a seat on a public promenade, as one did yesterday, and say, apropos of nothing, "Let us sing a nim," do so without a second voice chiming in from amongst the astonished crowd, never missing a shake, and then proceed to pray and preach, must have a very high degree of moral courage. I think I would rather have the cholera than do it myself—would not you? Do you wish that you were able to do it? I do not impugn the man's motives, which were doubtless excellent. God forbid that I should dare to call him hypocrite, or try to silence him. But still I don't admire him much. Neither him nor the man who held a banner inscribed with a Holy Mystery, on the Epsom-road, last Derby Day. *That* I would stop if I could, and it would be easily done if the well-meaning promoters of such exhibitions could only be made to see their demoralising effect; if they knew how often they surprise into blasphemy men who have no habitual disrespect for sacred things, but are out for a holiday, and in high spirits, inclined to see everything in a comic light. There stood the standard bearer, calm, fat-faced, smiling in conscious superiority, careless of chaff, utterly free from shame, though one would imagine that if anything would arouse a man's modesty it would be the finding himself advertised as the one good man amongst three converging multitudes—he had selected a four-cross road — of reprobates. Well, I cannot help regarding it as exceptionally fortunate that this standard bearer should have found a religious method of employing his moral courage. Had he been a director, now, with a tendency to peculation, no wholesome dread of exposure would have intervened to keep him straight.

THE LEGEND OF THE PRINCE'S PLUME.

A STORY OF THE BATTLE OF CRECY, FROM FROISSART'S CHRONICLES.

I.

White clung the sparkling frost to the long dry weeds in the hedges,
The bramble's crimsoning leaf spread crusted and curled with silver;
White nets of sparkling thread, the cobwebs hung on the bushes,
Where spiders, frozen and dead, were swaying like felons in fetters;
Heavy and frozen, the folds hung from the slumbering banners,
Muffled, and solemn, and low, came the sound of the sentinels' voices.

The old blind king on the hill stood, and the hum of the nations
Rose, and, filling the air, gladdened the heart of the monarch;
Armed, and wearing a crown, his long hair flowing and snowy,
Mixed with his beard as it fell on the steel and gold of his armour;
His thin hands leant on a sword that had shone in many a battle,
Sceptre and prop of a realm guarded from Mahomet's children;
His helm was crested with plumes, spoils of the birds of the desert,
A triple white feather and crest glittered high over his visor;
At his feet knelt, praying, his son, armed and prepared for the saddle;
His charger, pawing the ground, neighed by the open pavilion,
Ardent as hound for the chase, eager to leap on the lances.
The king spake never a word, but lifted his eyes unto Heaven,
And his tears fell trickling fast, as he muttered a prayer and a blessing;
But the son, impatient and hot, vaulted at once on his charger,
And cried to the banners, "Advance, in the name of the Prince of Bohemia!"
Then, with a flourish of horns, and a burst of chivalrous music,
The knights swept eagerly on, and bore down the slope of the valley,
With ruffle of pennon and flag, and a tossing of threatening lances,
As the blind king fell to the ground, and prayed with passionate weeping,
Blessing both banner and crest, in the name of St. James the Apostle,
The patron saint of his son, the saint of the land of Bohemia.

II.

Then the Bishop of Avignon came, and knelt at the feet of the champion,
Prayed him to tarry awhile, and not to lead yet to the battle.
"Strike at the English, the knaves!" cried the proud prince, smiling in anger;
"This day," said the heir to the throne, "we must win honour or perish."
Taking the flag in his hand, he swore to lead on with the foremost;—
Close, and deadly, and thick shot the threatening ranks of the archers,
Drawing together their shafts, equal in skill and in courage.
As the prince rode leisurely on, deep through the flood of the battle.
Stripes of crimson and white adorned their numberless trappings:
"These are womanly things!" cried the brave young prince of Bohemia;
"Away with this gilding and fur, this tinsel unstained by the battle—
These chains and jewels and gold, mere marks for the shafts of an archer;
Kings in the days of romance wore rude steel forged with the hammer,
Close-fitting hauberk of chain, defying the Mussulman sabres;
My father's is beaten and bruised, and split with Carpathian arrows,
Crimson with blood from the heart of Paynims, slain in the melée;
The badge I wear on my shield, was won in the fray with the heathen;
These plumes of an Arab fierce torn from the brow of an infidel Soldan,
To-day shall glimmer afar o'er the tempest and roar of the onset.
Leave women ermines and fur, soft mantles satin and silken;
Give me a clothing of steel, and adamant dug from the mountain,

Steel that may laugh at the swords and splinter the lances of iron,
Deriding even the stones from the catapults groaning and shrieking."
Then the prince he mounted his steed and rode down the hill to the battle:
You have read of the knights of romance—Perceforest, Tristram, and Arthur,
The giant whose mantle was trimmed with the beards of the kings he had vanquished—
Launcelot, knight of the lake, and Percival, slayer of dragons;
Yet these, though noble and rich, were clad like labouring peasants
Compared to the barons and earls who encircled the Prince of Bohemia.—
Gabriel, Count of Bayonne, cried, "To-day is the saddest of any,
Knights of Cyprus and Crete, if we beat not these English in battle."

* * * * *

Many the valorous deed as the axes shivered the lances,
As helms flashed sparkles of fire like the anvil under the hammer;
Flights of arrows and bolts flew thick as the swallows in autumn,
'Gainst the puissant monarch's array, 'gainst the horses blazoned and barded.
All the cross-bowmen of France led on the chosen battalion,
Close as the hairs of a brush were the numberless heads of the lances,
And through them, like roar of the beasts heard by night in a tropical forest,
Came cries of "St. Dennis for France," "St. Dennis for France and the Lilies;"
As the sun, breaking out of a cloud, shone on the swords and the armour,
While the trumpets were sounding, and rang with a merry and chivalrous cadence,
As they blew, came flying a dove, and perched on the staff of a banner;
Then they knew they were favoured of God, and clamoured, and all moved together.
"Advance!" loud shouted the prince, "and bear down these ravening robbers."
Chandos, and Talbot, and Scrope, guarding the clusters of archers;
The Duke of Athens is down, swept off by the hurrying eddies,
And under an oak in a lane, lies stretched Sir Reginald D'Artois.
Then, making the sign of the cross, and raising his eyes unto Heaven,
"Now is the season for death," cried the prince, and spurred to the rescue;
"Neville and Darcy and Scrope are hemming us in with their horses;
Strike, for the glory of God, strike, for the flag of St. Dennis!
Make us a way through the press, or die in the gap we have cloven;
Such is the usage of knights to dig out a grave with their axes;
Now, by St. Anthony's head, to the death of a knight or to conquest."
Then the prince leaped again on his steed, and hurled in the thick of the battle.

III.

But a traitor and villanous spy ran to the King of Bohemia,
Tears in his treacherous eyes, and knelt at the feet of the monarch.
"What tidings, Sir Knight, of my son? I fear he is slain in the melée?"
"Alas!" said the traitor, "he's fled by the highway leading to Paris,
Leaving his barons and flag to the care of his squires and his yeomen."
"Nay, then," the monarch replied, "it is fit I should fall in this battle,
Not caring an hour to survive this shame and this stain on my honour."
As he spoke rolled down on his beard hot tears of anger and sorrow.
"I will carry my banner to death through ranks of the insolent foemen;
Ah! as God is my help, I will never return from the battle,
By him, who weeping for us, died on the tree like a felon,
Let us break the van of these slaves. Advance, Sir Knight, with my banner.
Ye all are my vassals and friends," cried the king, as he smothered his sorrow;
"Ye will not refuse the request of an old man weary and broken;
I fain would strike with my sword, if only one blow in this contest,
'Tis better to fall in the field than to die with one's head on the pillow.
Tie my steed's bridle to yours, and lead me first with my banner."
Then two of the stalwartest knights tied their three bridles together,
And slow, and silent, and sad they rode down the hill to the valley.

IV.

"My son, any tidings of him?" said the king, as an archer came running,
And fell at the feet of his prince, wounded and feathered with arrows.
"How goes the battle below—where is my son and his horsemen?"—
"Ha! by St. Ives and St. Giles, and the crown of our Lady in Heaven,
Schwartzhof and Hoffmann are dead, and half the stout troopers of Binzlau."
"And my son?" "By the road that turns hard by the neighbouring valley,
I saw him lopping his lance four feet from the wood of the handle,
Doffing the spurs from his heels, and standing at bay 'mong the hunters;
His eyes half hid by the plumes that covered his brow and his forehead;
He had stripped his trappings and gems, his helm was dinted and cloven,
His sword was clotted and dark, and dark was his visor and armour,
His red beard tangled and long fell on his breast and shoulders,
His right hand, wielding an axe, was cleaving a road through the archers;
Mowing a path to the tents he trampled the dead and the dying.—
Seeing my armour and badge he waved me a proud salutation;—
Through flights of arrows and stones, mid the terrible roar of the engine,
Through thrustings of lances and blades, and sweepings of two-handed falchions,
Through cleavings of gorgets and shields and clouds of gathering banners,
Through shriekings, groanings, and cries, and curses, and moanings to Heaven,
I came to render thee aid, loving thee chiefest of any."
"Go," said the monarch, and sighed. "Thou hast home and a child to inherit.
My son is no traitor, thank God, but died in the heart of the onslaught;
I am now childless and old, and life is to me but a burden,
Go tell the monarch of France how the chief of Bohemia perished."
Then slow and silent and sad the old blind king and his courtiers
Bound all their bridles together and rode down into the battle.

v.

Deep under mountains of dead, gashed, and smitten, and trampled,
The heralds searching the field, counting the banners and scutcheons,
Found the corpse of the son pierced with arrows and lances;
Above him the old man lay, the old blind King of Bohemia,
One arm round the neck of the youth and one on a gash in his forehead.
The Black Prince pausing to watch the heralds seeking the banners,
Bent, and plucking the crest, the three white plumes of the ostrich,
Placed them, spotted with blood, in the battered peak of his helmet.

NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES.

By Charles Dickens.

A FLY-LEAF IN A LIFE.

Once upon a time (no matter when), I was engaged in a pursuit (no matter what), which could be transacted by myself alone; in which I could have no help; which imposed a constant strain on the attention, memory, observation, and physical powers; and which involved an almost fabulous amount of change of place and rapid railway travelling. I had followed this pursuit through an exceptionally trying winter in an always trying climate, and had resumed it in England after but a brief repose. Thus it came to be prolonged until, at length—and, as it seemed, all of a sudden—it so wore me out that I could not rely, with my usual cheerful confidence, upon myself to achieve the constantly recurring task, and began to feel (for the first time in my life) giddy, jarred, shaken, faint, uncertain of voice and sight and tread and touch, and dull of spirit. The medical advice I sought within a few hours, was given in two words: "Instant rest." Being accustomed to observe myself as curiously as if I were another man, and knowing the advice to meet my only need, I instantly halted in the pursuit of which I speak, and rested.

My intention was, to interpose, as it were, a fly-leaf in the book of my life, in which nothing should be written from without for a brief season of a few weeks. But some very singular experiences recorded themselves on this same fly-leaf, and I am going to relate them literally. I repeat the word: literally.

My first odd experience was of the remarkable coincidence between my case, in the general mind, and one Mr. Merdle's as I find it recorded in a work of fiction called Little Dorrit. To be sure, Mr. Merdle was a swindler, forger, and thief, and my calling had been of a less harmful (and less remunerative) nature; but it was all one for that.

Here is Mr. Merdle's case:

"At first, he was dead of all the diseases that ever were known, and of several brand-new maladies invented with the speed of Light to meet the demand of the occasion. He had concealed a dropsy from infancy, he had inherited a large estate of water on the chest from his grandfather, he had had an operation performed upon him every morning of his life for eighteen years, he had been subject to the explosion of important veins in his body after the manner of fireworks, he had had something the matter with his lungs, he had had something the matter with his heart, he had had something the matter with his brain. Five hundred people who sat down to breakfast entirely uninformed on the whole subject, believed before they had done breakfast, that they privately and personally knew Physician to have said to Mr. Merdle, 'You must expect to go out, some day, like the snuff of a candle;' and that they knew Mr. Merdle to have said to Physician, 'A man can die but once.' By about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, something the matter with the brain, became the favourite theory against the field; and by twelve the something had been distinctly ascertained to be 'Pressure.'

"Pressure was so entirely satisfactory to the public mind, and seemed to make every one so comfortable, that it might have lasted all day but for Bar's having taken the real state of the case into Court at half-past nine. Pressure, however, so far from being overthrown by the discovery, became a greater favourite than ever. There was a general moralising upon Pressure, in every street. All the people who had tried to make money and had not been able to do it, said, There you were! You no sooner began to devote yourself to the pursuit of wealth, than you got Pressure. The idle people improved the occasion in a similar manner. See, said they, what you brought yourself to by work, work, work! You persisted in working, you overdid it, Pressure came on, and you were done for! This consideration was very potent in many quarters, but nowhere more so than among the young clerks and partners who had never been in the slightest danger of overdoing it. These, one and all declared, quite piously, that they hoped they would never forget the warning as long as they lived, and that their conduct might be so

regulated as to keep off Pressure, and preserve them, a comfort to their friends, for many years."

Just my case—if I had only known it—when I was quietly basking in the sunshine in my Kentish meadow!

But while I so rested, thankfully recovering every hour, I had experiences more odd than this. I had experiences of spiritual conceit, for which, as giving me a new warning against that curse of mankind, I shall always feel grateful to the supposition that I was too far gone to protest against playing sick lion to any stray donkey with an itching hoof. All sorts of people seemed to become vicariously religious at my expense. I received the most uncompromising warning that I was a Heathen: on the conclusive authority of a field preacher, who, like the most of his ignorant and vain and daring class, could not construct a tolerable sentence in his native tongue or pen a fair letter. This inspired individual called me to order roundly, and knew in the freest and easiest way where I was going to, and what would become of me if I failed to fashion myself on his bright example, and was on terms of blasphemous confidence with the Heavenly Host. He was in the secrets of my heart, and in the lowest soundings of my soul—he!—and could read the depths of my nature better than his A B C, and could turn me inside out, like his own clammy glove. But what is far more extraordinary than this—for such dirty water as this could alone be drawn from such a shallow and muddy source—I found from the information of a beneficed clergyman, of whom I never heard and whom I never saw, that I had not, as I rather supposed I had, lived a life of some reading, contemplation, and inquiry; that I had not studied, as I rather supposed I had, to inculcate some Christian lessons in books; that I had never tried, as I rather supposed I had, to turn a child or two tenderly towards the knowledge and love of our Saviour; that I had never had, as I rather supposed I had had, departed friends, or stood beside open graves; but that I had lived a life of "uninterrupted prosperity," and that I needed this "check, overmuch," and that the way to turn it to account was to read these sermons and these poems, enclosed, and written and issued by my correspondent! I beg it may be understood that I relate facts of my own uncommercial experience, and no vain imaginings. The documents in proof lie near my hand.

Another odd entry on the fly-leaf, of a more entertaining character, was the wonderful persistency with which kind sympathisers assumed that I had injuriously coupled with the so suddenly relinquished pursuit, those personal habits of mine most obviously incompatible with it, and most plainly impossible of being maintained, along with it. As, all that exercise, all that cold bathing, all that wind and weather, all that uphill training—all that everything else, say, which is usually carried about by express trains in a portmanteau and hat-box, and partaken of under a flaming row of gaslights in the company of two thousand people. This assuming of a whole case against all fact and likelihood, struck me as particularly droll, and was an oddity of which I certainly had had no adequate experience in life until I turned that curious fly-leaf.

My old acquaintances the begging-letter writers came out on the fly-leaf, very piously indeed. They were glad, at such a serious crisis, to afford me another opportunity of sending that Post-office order. I needn't make it a pound, as previously insisted on; ten shillings might ease my mind. And Heaven forbid that they should refuse, at such an insignificant figure, to take a weight off the memory of an erring fellow-creature! One gentleman, of an artistic turn (and copiously illustrating the books of the Mendicity Society), thought it might soothe my conscience in the tender respect of gifts misused, if I would immediately cash up in aid of his lowly talent for original design—as a specimen of which he enclosed me a work of art which I recognised as a tracing from a woodcut originally published in the late Mrs. Trollope's book on America, forty or fifty years ago. The number of people who were prepared to live long years after me, untiring benefactors to their species, for fifty pounds a piece down, was astonishing. Also, of those who wanted bank notes for stiff penitential amounts, to give away:—not to keep, on any account.

Divers wonderful medicines and machines insinuated recommendations of themselves into the fly-leaf that was to have been so blank. It was specially observable that every prescriber, whether in a moral or physical direction, knew me thoroughly—knew me from head to heel, in and out, through and through, upside down. I was a glass piece of general property, and everybody was on the most surprisingly intimate terms with me. A few public institutions had complimentary perceptions of corners in my mind, of which, after considerable self-examination, I have not discovered any in-

dication. Neat little printed forms were addressed to those corners, beginning with the words: "I give and bequeath."

Will it seem exaggerative to state my belief that the most honest, the most modest, and the least vain-glorious of all the records upon this strange fly-leaf, was a letter from the self-deceived discoverer of the recondite secret "how to live four or five hundred years"? Doubtless it will seem so, yet the statement is not exaggerative by any means, but is made in my serious and sincere conviction. With this, and with a laugh at the rest that shall not be cynical, I turn the Fly-leaf, and go on again.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST. PLESHY AND DUNMOW TO COLCHESTER.

Dunmow is not far from Pleshy, and Pleshy is a place not to be lightly passed over by any observant crow, being a Shakespearean place, with the Bard's sign-manual engraved upon every mossy stone of its ruins. In the quiet little Essex village, embedded amid wheat and clover fields, there is a grassy enclosure, and in the midst of that green space rises a high steep mound, with stumps of old walls showing here and there among the turf, and with trees and bushes sprinkling the slopes. That high steep mound, ringed round by a deep ditch, which is crossed by an old bridge with a high stilted arch of old dark red brick, has been trodden by many kings and barons. Pleshy has from time immemorial been a fortress, and set apart for a place of vantage, defiance, or safety. It seems always to have won the soldier's eye, and to have set men rearing walls and digging trenches. It was first the Prætorian centre of a Roman camp, and money of the Legionaries has been found here. The Normans, who had quick eyes for seeing strong places, and quick hands for seizing them, built here in Stephen's troublous reign, when Geoffrey Mandeville, Earl of Essex, reared his keep upon the mound of Pleshy.

Afterwards, there dwelt here the wise, but harsh and severe Duke of Gloucester, the uncle of Richard the Second. Gloucester waged perpetual war on the Duke of Ireland and others of the young king's weak and wicked favourites, imprisoned Sir Simon Burley, a great warrior in Gascony under the Black Prince, and finally, in a rough and despotic way, settled matters by beheading Sir Simon and his friends and fellow minions, Sir Robert Trevilian, Sir Nicholas Bramber, and Sir John Standwich. Richard of Bordeaux, the son of the Black Prince, had begun well; he had quelled Wat Tyler's rebellion in a chivalrous way, by riding boldly among the Kentish bowmen and hammermen in Smithfield. He had led an army into Scotland and burnt Melrose. He had taken up arms against his turbulent and discontented barons, and lastly, striking down many Kerns and Gallowglasses, in spite of their knives and darts, and reducing to submission the Kings of Meath, Ulster, Leinster, and Connaught, had knighted them in Dublin Cathedral at the Feast of Our Lady in March. But gradually this young Absalom, this "plunger" of those days, grew worse and worse, more wantonly extravagant, more despotic, more like Edward the Second, more surrendered to dissolute and dangerous counsellors, abhorred by prelates, Lords and Commons.

He dreaded the Lord of Pleshy, his stern uncle, for his harsh reproofs, and his open contempt, but still more because it was rumoured that he would soon seize the crown, and reign from the Thames to the Humber. Into Richard's ready ear the wicked Achitophels poured the "leprous distilment of their devilish counsels." One summer afternoon the fine young king, rich in cloth of gold and jingling with golden bells, set out from Eltham with his retinue to visit his stern uncle at Pleshy. The king arrived before sunset; the warm light steeped the royal towers, and the duke, who was rough and soldierly in his habits, was already rising from supper. Food was served again for the king, and the meal over, Richard besought the duke to ride with him to London to give him advice on matters of state. The lure took, the trap fell, the duke was snared. He made himself ready for the thirty miles' evening ride, the king graciously saluted the duchess and her attendants, and they set forth. It was a base deed, and basely wrought. The duke once cajoled from his eyrie had but his numbered days to live. The king rode hard, avoiding Brentwood, and at Stratford he spurred ahead. It was about half-past ten at night, in a lane that led to the Thames, that the king laughingly waved his hand to his uncle, and struck spurs into his horse. That moment the Earl Marshal and his clump of spears rode up and arrested the duke. The duke struggled and shouted to the king. Richard, deaf to mercy, would not even turn his head, but rode on straight to his lodgings in the Tower. The duke the men forced at once into a boat that took him to a vessel lying ready at anchor in the Thames. The Earl Marshal and his pitiless men also embarked, the wind and tide were favourable; they dropped down the river, and arrived late the evening afterwards at Calais, of which place the earl was governor. The next day the king returned to Eltham and sent the Earls of Arundel and Warwick to the Tower. The Dukes of Lancaster and York, astonished at the king's courage, were afraid to act.

The duke, refused leave to visit the town of Calais, felt his death was near, and begged for a priest to calmly confess his sins, and to help him to appeal to God for mercy. His end was very near, as far as Froissart could ascertain; the day after his arrival, he was sitting down to dinner, the tables were laid, and he was already about to wash his hands, when four men rushed from an adjoining chamber and strangled him with a towel. Others, however, assert that Hall, one of the men engaged, after-

wards confessed that the duke was smothered with pillows. His body was then undressed, covered with furred mantles, and a report spread that he had died of a fit of apoplexy while dressing for dinner. The Earl Marshal, who was nearly related to the duke, instantly put on mourning for him, as did all the English knights and squires in Calais. The body of the murdered man was then embalmed, put into a leaden coffin, and sent to England. It was landed at Hadleigh Castle, that fortress whose mossy ruins still look down upon the junction of the Thames and Medway. There the dishonoured corpse, to which nobody dared show respect, was put in a cart and sent, without escort, to Pleshy to be buried in the church of the Holy Trinity, which the duke himself had founded, and endowed with twelve canonries. Here at last the stern duke found real mourners; and the duchess, his son Humphrey, and his two daughters shed bitter tears of rage and grief at his murder, and double cause indeed had the duchess to grieve, for the king had just had her uncle, the Earl of Arundel, beheaded in Cheapside before his own eyes, and the Earl of Warwick banished for life to the Isle of Wight, "opposite the coast of Normandy."

Pleshy-Plaisant, the pleasant place, had become a desolation; God's vengeance may sometimes seem slow, but it is unerring—two years after the halberds of those Pontefract men of arms raised together, fell together, and when they fell they beat out the life of Richard of Bordeaux. In Shakespeare's Richard the Second—a play in which the poet has thrown a false halo of sympathy over an abandoned and ruthless king—he makes the widowed Duchess of Gloucester revile John of Gaunt for not revenging his brother's slaughter, and the mourning duchess sends a sorrowful and bitter message to York, her dead husband's second brother:

> Bid him—ah, what?
> With all good speed at Pleshy visit me.
> Alack! and what shall good old York there see
> But empty lodgings and unfurnished walls;
> Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?
> And what hear there for welcome but my groans?
> Therefore commend me; let him *not* come there
> To seek out sorrow that dwells everywhere.

And in a later part of the same play the Duke of York at Ely House (Ely-place) commands a servant

> Sirrah! get thee to Pleshy, to my sister Gloster—
> Bid her send presently a thousand pounds.

Many a sorrowful day after, at Flint, and at Pontefract, Richard of Bordeaux must have thought of that fatal evening when at star rise "the murdered man" rode gaily beside him on the London-road, lured by treacherous flattery to a cruel death in the vaulted room at Calais.

Pipes and tabors sound your best, for Dunmow is hard by Pleshy, with its purple waves of clover not untenanted by bees; malthouse cowls peer out among the green trees. The crow honours Dunmow, not so much for the sake of its world-famous Flitch, as for having been the birthplace of one of those great originators who reshape the world on their lathes, and send it spinning on truer and faster. Lionel Lukin, the inventor of lifeboats, was born in this Essex village, and all advocates for local patriotism should desire to see a statue to him erected there, to incite future Dunmow men to direct their talents to as noble issues as Lukin. He obtained his patent in 1785. In 1789 a Mr. Henry Greathead, of South Shields, carried out a similar idea to meet a similar want, and by 1804 there had been thirty-one lifeboats built and three hundred lives saved. Mr. James Beeching, of Yarmouth, improved the lifeboat in 1851, and in 1852 the tubular lifeboat was patented by Mr. H. Richardson, "the challenger." In 1865 there were one hundred and eighty-five lifeboats on our coasts. In 1864 they and Captain Manby's invaluable rope-throwing rockets together had saved three thousand six hundred and nineteen lives, making, with the nine previous years, thirty-six thousand two hundred and sixty-one lives saved by the invention of Lionel Lukin, the noble man of Dunmow.

Ghosts of Beaumont and Fletcher hover round us while we tell of the old custom of Little Dunmow, referred to by Chaucer, and mentioned by Grose as a jocular tenure never to be forgotten. One of the Fitzwalters, in the early part of the thirteenth century, is said, after some sardonic reflections on the joys and sorrows, the roses and thorns of matrimony, to have first instituted the ceremony (circa May 3). He was probably the son of that "Mars of men," Robert Fitzwalter, father of Matilda the fair, a lady with whom King John fell madly in love. He banished her father, who was in the way, in 1213, and then sent a perfumed messenger to the lonely Matilda, with fresh protestations of his old suit; but she, being still cold, disdainful, and inexorable, the messenger, who either took it very much to heart, or else had conditional orders, poisoned the lady with a poached egg salted with arsenic.

The celebrated custom at Dunmow was to solemnly and rejoicingly present a flitch or gammon of bacon to any married couple who, a year and a day after their marriage, would take a prescribed oath that neither of them had repented their union, or had a word of quarrel. The claimants kneel on two uncomfortably sharp-pointed stones in the churchyard, and there, after certain other rites, take the following quaint oath:

> You shall swear by custom of confession,
> That you ne'er made nuptial transgression;
> Nor since you were married man and wife,
> By household brawls or contentious strife,
> Or otherwise at bed or at board,
> Offended each other by deed or by word;
> Or since the parish clerk said Amen,
> Wished yourselves unmarried again;
> Or in a twelvemonth and a day
> Repented not in thought any way;
> But continued true in thought and desire
> As when you joined hands in holy quire.
> If to these conditions without all fear,
> Of your own accord you will freely swear,
> A whole gammon of bacon you shall receive,
> And bear it hence with joy and good leave;
> For this is our custom at Dunmow well known
> Though the pleasure be ours, the bacon's your own.

This droll mode of rewarding forbearing tempers was certainly current even in Edward the Third's time, because Chaucer makes his merry, wanton wife of Bath say of her worried husband,

> The bacon was not fet, for hem, I trow,
> That some men have in Essex at Dunmowe.

The flitch was, it is said, claimed on an average about once in a century. The claim of the 20th of June, 1751, was peculiarly immortalised by an engraving of Moseley's, from an original drawing of the scene made by David Ogborne. It represents the joyous procession on their return from Dunmow Church with the flitch, and before the traditional quarrel had taken place, as to how the bacon was to be disposed of. The happy and successful claimants were Thomas Shakeshaft, weaver, of the parish of Weathersfield, and Ann his wife. They knelt down on the sharp stones, as cruelly insisted upon, took the oath, and bore away the gammon. Moseley's scarce engraving was republished by Cribb, 288, Holborn, in 1826. The celebrated Bowles, of Cornhill, also published another large print, now rare, of the Dunmow procession. After the repetition of the oath, the couple were seated in a square wooden chair, still preserved in the priory (very small it is), and carried round the site of the old manor, with drums and fiddles, and much noisy and exulting village minstrelsy, the flitch, totally ruined by the process, being thrust through with a pole, and carried before them. The steward's lord and officers of the manor followed with the inferior servants. Then came a very interesting part of the procession—the jury—six ogling bachelors and six smiling and backward-glancing maidens, who were by this great example urged onward to the blessed matrimonial state. The ceremony must indeed have been like a wedding breakfast—a perfect seedplot of future marriages. Many thousands of people from all villages and towns, even as far as the borders of Suffolk, then followed, shouting and exulting in this triumph of Love and Hymen.

The oaken chair used on this occasion, was probably the official chair of some former prior of Dunmow, or else the official seat of the lord of the manor, being that in which the Fitzwalters for generations had, perhaps, received the suit and service of their servants. It was, however, a satanic device, the very Fiend's arch mock, the shrewdest subtlety of Discord, Mrs. Candour's grandmamma, to make the chair too small, so that the jammed and aching couple should quarrel instantly they had won the prize.

A custom, almost precisely similar to that of Dunmow, existed at Whichenoure, in Staffordshire, but is much less generally known. Pennant, who visited Whichenoure House in 1780, states that it was "remarkable from the painted wooden bacon flitch still hung up over the hall chimney, in memory of the singular tenure by which Sir Philip de Somervile in the time of Edward the Third held the manor." The oath ran as follows: "Hear ye, Sir Philip de Somervile, Lord of Whichenoure, maintainer and giver of this bacon, that I, A., syth I wedded B., my wyfe, and syth I had her in my kepyng, and at wylle, by a yere and a daye after our marryge, I would not have changed for hane other, farer nor fowler, richer no pourer, ne for none other descended of gretter lynage, sleeping no waking, at noo time; and if the said B. were sole, and I sole, I would take her to be my wyfe before all the wymen of the worlde, of what condytions soevere they be, good or evyle, as help me God, and his seyntys, and this flesh and all fleshes." If the claimant were a "villager," corn and a cheese were given him in addition to the flitch, and a horse was likewise provided to take him out of the limits of the manor, all the free tenants thereof conducting him with "Trompets, tabourets, and other manoir of mystralsie." In respect to the Whichenoure flitch, Pennant remarks, that it has "remained untouched from the first century of its institution to the present," adding, jocosely, "We are credibly informed that the late and present worthy owners of the manor were deterred from entering into the holy state, from the dread of not obtaining a single rasher of their own bacon."

In Grose's time the Dunmow lords of the manor tried hard to save their bacon, and refused the honourable trial of the flitch to several believers in the excellence of gammon. Probably, says the sly, fat friend of Burns, it was refused because "conjugal affection is not so rare now as heretofore, or else because qualification oaths are now supposed to be held less sacred."

The Dunmow flitch was first claimed in 1445, at least that is the first claim on record. Shakeshaft and his wife were shrewd people, for they made a large sum, in 1751, by selling slices of the beatified bacon to many of the five thousand persons present. Gradually the custom slept, as good and bad customs sometimes do, had indeed a good nap of a hundred and four years, then Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, the historical novelist, made a gallant and disinterested effort to revive it. The lord of the manor opposed the revival as a nuisance, but Mr. Ainsworth and his friends defrayed the expense of the festival, and provided not merely one but two sets of claimants. We almost forget whether they were advertised for, but there they appeared as large as life, and much more real, Mr. and Mrs. Barlow, of Chipping Ongar, and the Chevalier Chatelaine, an ex-Bourdeaux editor, not unknown in England as the dexterous and rather daring translator of Chaucer and other of our poets. It was quite a romantic picture by Frith. Rosettes? We believe you! Banners? Rather! Fiddles, fifes and drums, trumpets, bassoons, and horns? Plenty of them. Whether the stubborn lord of the ill manner could not have been compelled by the Dunmow people to carry out the old tenure, is a moot point which the crow merely throws out to the worthy lawyers of Essex generally. Let the cynics say what they like;

let them compare marriage to a bag of snakes and eels (stuff!), to a lottery (pshaw!), to a birdcage—those who are in wishing to get out, and those who are out wishing to get in (rubbish!), we despise such bitter churls (out on them). They know well enough (a pest on 'em!) the sour wretches, that every pair of us has deserved the blessed flitch, and that no one of us ever repented his marriage within the year—at least, let them say so who will. It was a goodly ceremony, and impressed on the Essex maidens those fine lines of the ex-shrew, Katherine:

"Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
And for thy maintenance commits his body
To painful labour, both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
While thou liest warm at home, secure and safe,
And craves no other tribute at thy hands,
But love, fair looks, and true obedience,
Too little payment for so great a debt."

The last flitch given away was in 1860.

At Colchester-on-the-Colne the crow is bound to descend for two reasons: first, for the sake of its old and immortal monarch, King Cole; secondly, for the sake of the touching story of the two Cavalier friends, who were here shot by Fairfax for defending the city stoutly against the Parliament. This Essex town, situated on the eminence above the river, was an old British post, appreciated by the Romans, and moulded by their strong hands into Camalodunum (temp. Claudius). Here it is supposed Cunobelin and his sons, Guiderius and Arviragus (Caractacus), reigned. (Shakespeare has endeared these names to us by culling them from early British history, Bede or Gildas, and making them the sons of his Cymbeline.) This town, where the Romans built temples and theatres, and established a mint, was one of their favourite colonies, and was often fought for, especially in 62, when the fierce Boadicea chased the Romans from the town, and slew the entire ninth legion.

It was not till the third century that the real King Cole shone forth; but alas! he had no fiddlers three, and therefore never called for them. He was really a most respectable potentate, fond of oysters, and naturally much respected by the natives. Like a true British sailor, he rebelled from the Romans, resolving that Britons never, *never*, NEVER should be slaves, and was instantly besieged in Colchester by Constantius Chlorus, a vigilant Roman general.

The siege lasted for three years, and promised to be as long as that of Troy, when one day of truce the susceptible Roman happened to see Helena, old King Cole's beautiful golden-haired daughter, on the ramparts, and, exclaiming "Dea certe!" proposed immediate peace, so that he might marry Helena. King Cole joined hands on that bargain with the gallant officer, and the result was Constantine the Great, who was born at Colchester, and who deserves a statue there if ever man did. In 306 he was proclaimed emperor at York.

Those tormenting vermin of England, the Danes, when not foraging up the Blackwater, were fond of investigating the Colne, and there either opening oysters, or breaking open houses. They grew fond of the place, stuck close to the oysters, and made the place a stronghold, a fortified port, and a centre of departure for murder and plunder. But hard times came for them in 921, when Edward the Elder stormed the town, put the wild Danes to the sword, and repeopled the place with stolid, honest West Saxons.

When grave men sat down to prepare the Doomsday Book, Colchester was still a thriving town. In 1218 (Henry the Third) Louis the Dauphin took the town on the Colne. In Edward the Third's reign Colchester sent five ships and a hundred and seventy seamen to the royal fleet, raised for the blockade of Calais, when our great king took the key of France, and his noble-hearted wife begged the lives of the six burgesses, as history has immortalised.

Then Colchester went on very quietly, feeding on her "weaver's beef" (sprats), till Lady Jane Grey's friends tried to seize the throne; when the Colchester men stood out for gloomy Queen Mary, who, after her accession, complimented them by visiting the town. In Elizabeth's time the persecuted Flemings began to gather in the place to such an extent, that the jealous bailiffs and aldermen grew alarmed, and issued a command that no stranger should be permitted to reside within the precincts of Colchester, without their special consent.

But the crowning legend of the town, in the crow's eye, is the touching story of the death of those brave gentlemen, Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, who, under Goring, Earl of Norwich, held Colchester, in 1648, against Fairfax and the Parliament. The deaths of these gallant, though mistaken, Cavalier officers happened thus: Cromwell had just smashed up the Scotch army of the Duke of Hamilton in the North. The Prince was with his fleet in the Downs, the poor King a prisoner in Carisbrook, the Earl of Holland had been taken near Kingston in an affair of cavalry, in which young Villiers was struck down, and Goring and Lord Capel, with the Kentish and Essex Royalist troops were shut up in Colchester. The Cavaliers there, having eaten nearly all their horses, and despairing of relief from the tardy Scotch army, sent to Fairfax to propose terms.

Fairfax would dismiss the common soldiers, but would grant no conditions to the officers and gentlemen. A day or two was spent in deliberation. The fiercer sort were for a brisk sally at all hazards, but they had too few horses, and those that were left were weak for want of sufficient food. Some were for dashing open a port, and for dying sword in hand; but that was only to be butchered without chance of revenge, so at last the calmer counsel prevailed. They all surrendered, threw open the gates, and were at once led to the Town Hall, locked in and guarded. Presently a Puritan officer entered the room, and demanded a list of the prisoners'

names for the general. They gave it, and a guard presently returned for Sir Charles Lucas, Sir George Lisle, and Sir Bernard Gascoigne. The butchers had come into the crowded slaughter-house, and dragged out their selected victims. The men were brought before Fairfax, who (instigated as Clarendon thinks by the inflexible Ireton) told them that after so long and obstinate a defence, it was necessary, for the example of others, that the peace of the kingdom should be no more disturbed, and that some military justice should be done;—those three men must be presently put to death, and they were instantly led into a yard contiguous, where three files of musketeers were drawn up ready for the dreadful duty.

Sir Bernard Gascoigne was a gentleman of Florence, who had just English enough to explain that he required only pen, ink, and paper, so that he might write a letter to the Grand Duke to explain how he had lost his life, and who should inherit his estates. Sir Charles Lucas, the younger brother of a lord, and the heir to his title, had been bred up in the Low Countries, and had served in the cavalry. "He was very brave," says Clarendon, "and in the day of battle a gallant man to look upon and follow, but at all other times and places of a nature not to be lived with, of an ill understanding, of a rough and proud nature, which made him during the time of their being in Colchester more intolerable than the siege, or any fortune that threatened them. Yet they all desired to accompany him in his death." Lisle, compared with Lucas, was as summer to winter. Though fierce to lead and certain to be followed, he had "the softest and most gentle nature imaginable, loved all, and beloved of all, and without a capacity to have an enemy."

When the news of the cruel resolution reached the prisoners, the cavaliers were deeply moved, and Lord Capel instantly prevailed on an officer of their guard to carry a letter to Fairfax, entreating him either to forbear the execution, or that all of them, being equally guilty, might undergo the same sentence. The answer was only an order to the officer to carry out his order, reserving the Italian to the last. The three cavaliers were led forth into the castle courtyard. The men fired, and Lucas fell dead. Seeing that, Sir George Lisle ran to the body, embraced it, kissed the stern rugged face, then stood up, looked at the soldiers' faces, and thinking the men were too far off, told them to come nearer. One of the musqueteers exclaimed:

"I'll warrant you, sir, we hit you."

Lisle replied, smiling:

"Friends, I have been nearer you when you have missed me."

Thereupon they all fired at him, and under that shower of fiery lead he fell instantly without uttering a word. Sir Barnard Gascoigne had already stripped off his doublet, and was expecting his turn, when the officer told him he had orders to carry him back to his friends, "for which mercy he cared not a whit." The council of war had feared that if his life was taken, their friends or children for several generations would be in danger when travelling in Italy

When, what Clarendon calls, "the bloody sacrifice," was completed, Fairfax and the chief officers went to the town hall to visit the surviving prisoners. The Puritan general treated the Earl of Norwich and Lord Capel courteously, apologised for the necessities of military justice, but said that the lives of all the rest were safe, and that they should be all well treated and disposed of as the Parliament directed. Lord Capel's high courage could not endure this; he bade the Puritans finish their work, and show them the same rigour; upon which there were, says Clarendon, "two or three sharp and bitter replies between him and Ireton, which cost Capel his life a few months after." While in the Tower Capel made a daring escape, but was soon recaptured and beheaded, together with the Duke of Hamilton and the Earl of Holland, on a scaffold before Westminster Hall.

The ruins of Colchester Castle still exist. It is stated to have been built by Edward the Elder. It stands on an eminence to the north of the high street. The splayed loop-holed windows and square flat buttresses show Norman work. On the south side courses of Roman tiles and herring-bone work intersect the clay-stone walls; the labels and groins are of Kentish rag or Purbeck stone, all dyed with weather stains and furred with coloured mosses. The western side, Mr. Walcott says, measures one hundred and sixty-six feet, the walls are thirty feet broad at the foundation, and are flanked with north-east and north-west towers. In the south-east bastion is a chapel, now a militia armoury. In the keep were two suites of apartments; the walls of the gateway are all that is left of the approach. The great south gate is still preserved, and there are still visible the grooves for the portcullis and the niche for the warder. There is an earth rampart round the Roman wall on the north and east sides. During the siege the choir of St. Botolph's was destroyed by Fairfax's cannon. St. Martin's Church and St. John's Abbey also suffered greatly, and all the fortifications of Colchester were subsequently dismantled. The Balkon gate and other portions of the old wall are full of round Roman tiles from old Camalodunum, and they gleam out red from among the glossy green ivy.

MR. LUFKIN AT A BULL FIGHT.

No—it weren't in our home paddock—neither were it in the Four Acre, which the fences are not all I could desire, and cattle, if restless, and out of yummer with flies and what not, has been know'd to work through. Don't let none o' you be startled. Now, then. 'Twere in Spain, actiwally in Spain! If hanybody had ventered to tell me that I, James Lufkin, should one day travel to Sarah Gosser, I should have felt inclined for to punch his head, as

chaffin' of me. Howsoever, the day come, I went, and this is how 'twas.

Imagine the astonishment of me and Mrs. Hel, when, one morning, as we was at breakfast, up comes the postman to the winder, and delivers in a letter bearin' a forren stamp—head of a young 'oman, hupside down, featurs good, but perky, hinscription, "Correyos Reales."

"Why, what d'ye make o' this?" I asks.

"Queen o' Spain's, I fancy," says the postman, with the indifference of his specious. "You're 'senior' Lufkin, I suppose?" he adds, grinning.

"Well, there a'nt no junior, *yet*," says I, with a wink at my missis, which colored, and poured out the tea.

Sure enough, the letter was addressed to "Señor Lufkin, Goodburn-close, Hogsmead, Lincoln, Hangletare." Hafter spekilatin' nigh half-an-hour who it could possibly be from, we opened it. Who *should* it be, but Tom, my missis's cousin (you remember Tom?) which took us to see the Mrs. Davingpodge, and which we'd never set heyes on, since that curous hinvestigation.

Now, Tom is that sort o' movable chap, that, if you heerd of him yesterday at Broadstairs, you might reasonably expect a note from him to-morrow, from the himmediate wicinity of ancient Babylon. If he telegraphted from Chaney, that he was off to Japan, having took final leaf of England, my missis, without any hobservation, would get our spare bed ready for him, to-morrow. We wasn't surprised, therefore, to find that Tom had wisited Sarah Gosser.

Nor it wasn't so very strange, his writin' to *me*. Hever since that evening at the Mrs. Davingpodge's, we had been, though we never met, the best o' friends. He came home to supper that night with us, and after we'd spoke of the hevents of the hevening, and I'd gone so far as to allow that the sudden huntying of a rope, under very peculiar and critical circumstances, might be a useful haccomplishment to a certain class o' men, my wife went up to bed, and we had a deal o' friendly talk, Tom and me had, hover our pipes and toddy. We agreed that we had been very sad fellows, and sowed a mighty power o' wild oats, to be sure! (My wust enemies wouldn't accuse me of much in *that* line; but my hobject, you see, were to set poor Tom at his hease, and seem wery penitent for what I hadn't done.) But that we felt it were now high time to steady down, and putt our shoulders to the wheel.

Tom was franker than ever I know'd him. He told me all his adventures, the fortins he'd been on the brink o' making, and the ill-luck that spiled so many of his hexlent designs, the theayter he'd built, with self-hacting scenery, lights, and box-keeping, which went to smash; the "Hevery 'Alf-hour Hexpress" which cum to grief; the gun which bust; and the Polish conspiracy, which was hanged in hinfancy.

He had now got in hand a wonderful Drayma, which, being took from the French, and put into Irish, with a railway smash, and a plunge down the Falls of Niagara, would make the fortins of half the managers in Europe, besides helevating the drama almost out o' sight.

In return, I told him the luck I had had at Hogsmead, 'specially with beasts, and of the good bit o' money I had already put by. This pleased Tom very much. We got more and more agreeable together. We shook hands a good many times, in the course o' the evening, and, I don't remember much else, 'cept that, next morning, I found that one o' my ten pun'-notes had turned into a I. O. U., bearin' the signature, shaky, but legible, "Thomas Ketcham Tirritup."

(I never mentioned that little hepisode to Mrs. Hel, and if ever this comes to be published, in the same singular manner as the former, I only begs that the printer'll leave out the last parrowgraft.)

Now, we comes back to Tom's letter.

'Twas wrote in the best o' sperrets, Tom statin' that he was already good 'alf-way up the 'ill o' fortune, which he'd been so long a-bungling at the foot of. Seeing how lucky I had been in the bullock line, he had gone in for a branch of the same, and was already half-proprietor of one o' the wery finest establishments in Sarah Gosser. Such were the popilarity of the stock—'specially small but hactive bulls, supplied from the grazing farms of Ramirez Vermijo and Tirritup—that it was sometimes hard to make room for all that came to bid. They did a little in horses, too, but weren't so lucky as in t'other. It seems bulls didn't agree with 'em. At all events, the mortality in the stable was wery serious, and Tom hinted that a consignment of animals from England—'specially of cab-'osses as had served their four or five year, and had anything the matter—exceptin' glarnders—would be wery acceptable. Hoddly enough (added Tom) they was in a position to give five shillings more for a blind 'oss, than one as saw.

"Well, Jem, I never!" put in my wife. "That *is* a queer fancy."

"The work," Tom adds, "is 'hexceptional.'"

"What's that, Hel?"

"Mill work," says I (I always likes to make ready answer)—"grinding bones, or something o' that kind. It's depressing to a thinkin' 'oss to be walking round and round, and seeing what his own bones is gradually workin' to."

"*Do* 'osses think?" asks my wife.

"What d'ye suppose their brains is doing all day long, in the stable?" I asks. Then, before she'd time to ask me what *I* thought they was doing, I reads on.

"'With *your* experience, an' a little capital, I could dewelope the business o' Ramirez Vermijo and Tirritup to a hextent hundreamed of in the wildest wisions o' avarice. Hafter that, I'll sit down a contented man.'"

"Poor Tom!" says Mrs. Hel, wisibly effected; "he's not a bad fellow, you see."

"'You remember our conwersation,'" I continued, reading, "after the sworry, shay Davingpodge Brothers, and how we agreed that, having now, both on us, had our swing and enj'yed our little games——'"

"Hey-day!" says Mrs. Hel, sharp; "read that again. What hever does he mean by that? —*your* little games—*your* litt——"

"'Spose he illudes to my hentering my old mare for the steeplechase," I answers, hastily. "But, you know, it didn't come off. So—so—Ha . . . 'Now,' Tom goes on, 'if you and cousin Matty'll pop on your seven-league boots, and step across to Sarah Gosser, I can promise you a 'arty welcome, hexlent wine, and universal ciwility, which, if it don't mean much, hexpresses a deal. And,' concluded Tom, 'as we partic'larly want your opinion of a black Handalusian bull, with short sharp 'orns, we hope you'll not disappint us, but'll come next week. Your affectionate, Tom K. Tirritup. P.S. Ramirez Vermijo kisses my cousin's hand.' The deuce he does! He must have a pretty long neck," says I, as I folded up the letter, thoughtfully, and put it in my pocket, keeping out, however, a specious of map, meant to show us the way, with many ins and outs, and roads and names; but with Hogsmead and Sarah Gosser wrote very large, and so nigh together that it seemed quite sing'lar they'd hitherto know'd so little of each other.

There was a pause, after which,

"If we'd wanted *wery* much to go, Hel," says my wife, timidly, "'twould have been just the only time—wouldn't it, now?"

"'Twould have cost a pot o' money," says I, "all for to see a Handalusian bull. 'Twould have been cheaper to send him to *me*."

"So it would, my dear. Just like Tom, but——"

"Fine open weather, ain't it, Mrs. Hel?" says I, to change the subject and diwert her mind.

"Wery fine—'specially for them as happens to be travellin' by land or by water. They not only has the pleasure, but'll be prayed for," says my wife, softly.

"They has *expenses*, Mrs. Hel," I thought it my duty to say.

"Wery true," she says, with a sigh. "By the by, Jem, what hever does Tom mean by saying that you and he had 'had your sw——'"

"And so you'd railly like to cross the salt seas, dear?" says I, pinching her ear.

"Yes, I would, no matter *how* salt they was," said my wife, stoutly. "But, Jem—'little games'? If——"

"Then, I tell you what—you shall," hinterrupted I. "So go and clap on your wust bonnet."

O' course I was only joking about the bonnet, for it took us several days to prepare. I, for my part, wanted to say nothing about it, it not being favourable for things in general, to be know'd that the master's going far away. But my wife was proud of this tremenjious journey, and it soon got wind. We was looked at with hinterest and astonishment. Compliments, likewise commissions, came pouring down upon us. Folks seemed to think that Spain produced everything other countries didn't. But we shortened it by declining to bring back anything but liquorice, which, packing close, and being wery likely to dissolve on the way, we cheerfully hundertook to any amount.

To be sure, going to Spain is not a hevery-day affair; still, there was no call for the club givin' me a farewell dinner at the Salutation. Have it, however, they *woold*. All I stipulated for was, that there was to be no speeches—that it were not to be called a "dinner," but a conwivial repast, and that Stephen Dumbush, who had never been heerd to utter anything beyond a grunt, in the memory of man, was to be in the chair. There were to be no formality, nor nothin' stronger than rum-punch.

When the day come, though nothin' was *said* about any dinner, the coincidences as happened wos curious in the hextreme. Everybody seemed to have particular business at Hogsmead—as might keep them out till bed-time. Neighbour Burdock, Stephen Dumbush, and old Bullwinkle—rode in together. Singlerly, everybody'd hordered dinner at the same hour—half-past four! There was a table at the Salutation, haccidentally laid for twenty-five, just the number as chanced to meet! The big chair, at the top, 'appened to be hoccupied by Mr. Dumbush. Into the chair on his right hand, I permiscuously dropped, and we found ourselves dining sumptiously, and makin' a din you might have heard at Lincoln!

Honly distant illusions was at first made to our journey.—"Our neighbour's brief absence"—"Lufkin's hinteresting project"—"Jem's little forrin start," etc. Hafterwards as we warmed up, they was more plain.

George Burdock remarked that, o' course, he wasn't going to make a speech, but he *did* see a gentleman present which to drink a cordial health to—and his wife—wouldn't do no harm to anybody. The party he had in his heye was going to a distant land, of which wery little was generally know'd, except that there was hinsurrections twice a week, and a down right rebellion hevery 'alf year. It was hard to get at, but he believed that, when a man giv' his mind to it, and arrived, there was good cattle—'specially bulls—and he hoped that the wisit of Mr. Lufkin would lead to such a cordial hinterchange of beasts, as would be creditable to both countries. With the consent of the chair (Mr. Dumbush nodded) he would give the health of Mr. and Mrs. Lufkin, of Goodburn Close.

Mr. Stonedyke, though mindful of the gineral understanding that there was to be no speeches, could not deny himself the pleasure of seconding that proposal, hadding that, since their respected neighbour had already distinguished himself as a author—in regard to sperrets—the public would be nat'rally impatient for his views with respect to the crossin' o' red Herefords with the short-horned northern stock.

Mr. Bullwinkle would only say one word. Mention had been made of Spanish bulls. For John Bull to have to be taught by a Spaniard what a bull was, almost amounted to an Irish one. He thought that the only advantage of Spanish stock over our'n, was an hincreased hinclination to fight, and tempers more heasily haggravated.

Young Tom Thicknesse (which an't wery

bright) wished to ask one question. He believed as Spain led through France. He read, at school that the French kep' their accounts in franks and sows. Now, for travellers, like Mr. Lufkin, to carry sows——"

Tom was stopped by a sing'ler hincident. Stephen Dumbush, which had hitherto done his duty so admirably, in the chair, that you needn't have know'd he was present, and hadn't uttered a voluntary word since he was married—nigh twenty years ago—suddenly gets up! A convulsion o' nature wouldn't have surprised us more. He lays down his pipe, as though he shouldn't want it again for half an hour—he looks slowly round—his eyes goggle—he opens his mouth. Then he shuts it again—and sits down. Whether his courage failed him—whether he thought he'd made a speech, and hadn't—or whether he was only countin' noses, with a view to the bill—were never know'd, to this day!

After recovering a little from the disappintment Stephen had giv' us, everybody drunk my health and Mrs. Hel's, and I returned thanks, merely observing that I would follow the hexlent example set me, and hadd nothing—or less. True, I were about to wisit Sarah Gosser, and my friend Rummyres Frummagio had already kissed my wife's 'and—by post, which was Spanish for 'how-d'ye-do? Wery glad to see you.' If the presence of a blunt Englishman could go any ways to 'eal any little soreness that might still exist on the score of the Harmada, I should be wery glad, and if I found their stock hinferior to ours, gladder still. Mr. Stonedyke need not hexpect hanything from my pen. Sheep, not hink, filled my pens! My letter concernin' the sperrets was a privileged communication. It was addressed to a humble country-print, and, lo and be'old! it comes out in a wery different paper, conducted by a gentleman which could have know'd nothing of *me*—unless it might have been at the Tugmorden Hagricultural, as second-silver in boar-pigs, and 'igh commendation in turnips. My neighbour Bullwinkle might be heasy. Stiffikits of character should be required, with hevery bull I purchased. Sweetness and forbearingness of disposition, hindispensable. As regards the question of Mr. Thicknesse, I had ascertained that, although sows were freely used in small commercial transactions, it was not necessary to hexport your whole stock, there being a coin of similar name, which might be used, instead. In conclusion, I thanked them all 'eartily, and moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Dumbush, for his hable silence in the chair.

Folks going to France a'most hevery day—I needn't say more than that we found heverybody wery polite, and partial to franks—and it were only when we got to a place, hoddly called "Buy on," and hentered Spain, that our troubles began. We had just cut in for one of those half-yearly rebellions I have mentioned. This, however, was more seriouser than common. The queen had bolted for good and all, without 'aving 'ad time to put on her crown. That was why they'd turned her topsy-turvy on my letter. Great hexcitement was wisible, 'specially when we stopped to dine, and was only given three minutes and a half. Heverybody was talkin' of "freedom" and "liberty"—and wery free they was—and great liberties took with Mrs. Hel's baggage—searching heverything, even to shaking out her chemises. I see them busy over a bundle of her curlpapers (which was old farm-accounts of mine) and there was a power of talking and comparing, before they was hultimately put back. A gentleman as spoke English told me they was suspected of being "Carlist dockyments."

Heverything, as we approached Sairey Gosser, seemed to get dearer and dearer, which, the same gent assured us, was another glorious sign o' freedom.

At Sairey Gosser, Tom Tirritup met us at the station, stopped a gineral fight for our luggage, and, elbowing right and left, got us safely away to a wery fine hotel—the "Horiental." Our coachman, bein' free, wanted ten franks, to which request Tom merely replied, "Caramba!" and gave him *two*. We had a hexlent supper, and Tom said he had selected that hotel for us, because the waiters, though Spanish, spoke Italian, which was a great convenience and satisfaction!

My wife, being tired, went to bed, when Tom perjuiced some wery choice tobacco, smuggled (through a hamicable arrangement with a gentleman at the Custom-house) by Ramirez Vermijo, and opened his budget. There was to be a wery great cattle show on the morrow, patronised by the provisional government, in horder to amuse the people while they was making choice among the fifteen gentlemen who had kindly offered to be king. With regard to the black Handalusian bull I had chiefly come to see, Tom reported that he was in the best of health, and—not having been fed for two days—would be hactive and hirritable on the morrow, and so be seen to the greater adwantage.

This sounded hodd; but, not to show ignorance, I honly nodded, and made a secret resolution not to go near that noble hanimal till he had dined.

Tom ended a long discourse on the hinteresting character of Spanish bulls, with the remark that, if he could honly command the sum of one thousand pounds, he distinctly saw his way to making it twenty. At this point of the conversation, however, I got wery sleepy, and we presently separated for the night.

Sairey Gosser is the bawlingest town I hever know'd. Shouting and singing went on till half-past three. Then there was quiet for half an hour; after which began a jingling of bells up and down the streets, stopping at different houses. This, they told us afterwards, meant hasses' milk, which, at four in the morning, must have been a wery pleasant and inwigorating tipple.

Heverything was alive the next morning, for the cattle show was to hopen at twelve o'clock, and all Sairey Gosser, women-folks and all, was going. Tom Tirritup came to breakfast, and brought a request from Ramirez Vermijo that I would place him (Ramirez V.)

at the feet of Mrs. Hel; but, me hobjecting, Tom explained that it was honly another form o' compliment.

Raythor to my surprise, Tom did not wish Mrs. Hel to accompany us, stating that, owing to the huneven temper of bulls, and to hosses gittin' in the way, haccidents of a serious natur' were not unusual. My missis, however, p'inted out that she had not come all that way to be left alone; also that her nerves was good, and that, by taking with her some salts and sticking-plaster, she might be wery useful in case of need. So Tom called a coach, and hoff we went.

The streets leading to the show was one tremenjious jam. Such a lot of carriage company I never see! Such a floating o' weils and fluttering o' fans! Such a capering of hosses and whiffing of paper cigars! Such gineral hexcitement as must have been wery gratifying to the feelins of the stock we was coming to examine, if they could honly have know'd it in time!

At last we entered the building, and was placed in what Tom said were hexlent seats, reserved for us by Ramirez Vermijo. But wheer was the pens? There wasn't a livin' creature wisible, honly about ten thousand people, hoccupying seats or walking about in a sanded harea below. Tom, however, explained that the beasts was hexhibited one at a time; and, on my remarking that, unless I was allowed to feel and closely hinspect the warious animals, I couldn't hoffer an opinion as was worth anything. Tom merely rejined, that both he and Ramirez Vermijo would take it as a favour that I should do so, as hoften as I saw fit.

Hall on a sudden, a gate was flung open below. The people as was walking about himmediately got over the double rails that went round the place, and took their seats. Then a percession hentered the harea. Fust came four trumpeters, in beautiful hold-fashioned dresses, with flags 'anging to their hinstruments; then a gent in a wery tight rich dress, blue and gold, 'aving a sword in his right hand, and hover his left arm a large red silk 'ankerchief. ("The mattydoor," said Tom, in my ear. "Ho," says I, winking.) Hafter the mattydoor (which was applauded, and bowed back) come six men on horseback—if 'osses they might be called—for I wouldn't have given ten pound for the lot. The men was all padded down their right sides, as if they'd broke their right ribs, including the thigh and leg, and was in splints, according, and carried pikes hornamented with ribbins. ("Pickadoors," whispered Tom. "O, *doos* they," says I.) Next their come eight or ten men in smart jackets, sashes, and knee-breeches, with little spikes in their hands, likewise with ribbins; and, lastly, a string o' ten mules, 'arnessed, but not droring anything, and a'most covered with silver and ribbins. It was altogether a wery pretty sight, and Mrs. Hel applauded 'eartily.

When they had marched all round the circle, a gent in a bright uniform, wery well mounted, pranced into the ring, stopped in front of the largest box, made a speech in Spanish, and 'eld out his hat, into which a gentleman, which, Tom said, was the governor, threw a big key, hornamented with the heverlasting ribbins. This the mounted gent 'anded to an attendant on foot, who went and hopened another door, and popped be'ind it, while everybody else got out of the way as quickly as they could.

Pwish!—Wot a bound!—There was a cloud of sand and dust, which dispersed, and showed a bull—hash-grey in color, with short but sharp horns, p'inting well forrard, on each side of a head that seemed good half a yard across, and covered with short thick curling 'air. His eyes glowed like danger-signals on a railway-line—he lashed hisself with his tail, and tore deep trenches in the sile, as if he was diggin' a grave for the fust as should cross his way!

Mrs. Hel and me was still admiring that finely-deweloped beast, when two of the men in splints, mounted on the waluable hosses, rode right into the ring, hopposite the bull, and stood stock still, with their pikes pinting towards him. At fust, he didn't notice them, being hinterested in the ladies' fans, which fluttered like a thousand pigeons. I had just time to whisper, "Bless my soul, Tom, do they *want* to haggravate him?" and Tom to answer, coolly, "Shouldn't vonder," when—broosh!—the bull was upon the nearest! The man caught him in the shoulder with his pike, but the horse, seemingly groggy, reeled so that I thought both was over. There was a bust of applause, in the midst of which my wife huttered a little shriek—and turned pale.

"The blood! The blood! The poor dumb creeter! why does they provoke him then?"

"Hush, hush, my dear cousin!" said Tom, 'astily. "It don't go in fur. See how the hother ladies enjyes it?"

And, be ashamed to them, so they did!

By this time the bull had wriggled hisself off the pike, and, mad with pain and hanger, made a furious dash at the second horseman, which received him in the same way.

"Tom, Tom, do you call this a cattle show?" said my wife, faintly. "I call it a cruel, wicked, wanton——"

"Well, it brings out their best qualities, you see," says Tom, lighting a cigarette; "we judges o' the soundness o' the stock by the way they bears theirselves under trying circumstances—Ha!—Bravo, Toro!"

"Bravo, Toro!" shouted thousands o' voices.

The bull, shaking hisself clear, had charged like lightning on the man's undefended side. There lay on the ground a shapeless heap, composed of man and horse, a mass of blood, and, more shocking still, the entrails of the fallen quadruped, smoking on the sand.

"Take me out, Hel," gasped my wife, "or I shall die!"

Tom and I removed her quickly into the air, and, the faintness passing, put her into a carriage. I was stepping in, too, but the good soul whispered me that it would 'ardly be the right thing to leave Tom alone. So, hafter

seeing her comfortably hoff, back I went with Tom.

There was more hexcitement than hever. You'll 'ardly believe it—but, in that short time, the bull had killed three more hosses, and hinjured a man—and was raging about the enclosure, shaking the blood in showers from his horns and head. Many of the ladies was half standing, waving their fans, and hurraying like the men. For myself, wexed as I was at the trick Tom had played us, I hown I was not free from the prewailing hexcitement — so, speaking coldly, I says:

"Wotever may be my priwate opinion of your *cattle show*—Mr. Tirritup—I consider that, bein' here, it is my dooty to see it hout—if honly in the hope that something may occur to halter my present impression."

"All right, old fellow," says Tom. "See!"

Just at that moment, a trumpet sounded, and several of the men with the ribbined spikes ran into the enclosure, and began dancing about the bull, teasing and hirritating him, leaving their spikes fixed in his neck; but halways saving their own skins in a wonderful way.

"They know, you see," says Tom, "by the prick of his ear, which side he's goin' to charge, and sticks him on the t'other."

At last, one man brought a chair, and sat hisself down in it as coolly as if he was goin' to have a quiet chat with the bull. He had in each hand a spike, to which was fastened a sort of cracker. Down goes the bull's tremenjious head, and he rushes at the sitting man. Hup goes the chair, twenty feet in the hair; but the man stands by, laughing, and on each side of the poor beast's head are stuck the spikes, spattering fire! There was more tricks and teasing, such as 'anging their 'ats on the bull's horns, hexcetera, but the hanimal got tired o' fighting nothing, and there was a pause, when the trumpet sounded again, heverybody bolted, and henter the mattydoor, glistening like a 'arlequin. There was a roar of applause.

"'Hel Tato' is deservedly pop'lar," remarked Tom, "'aving polished off his four hundred bulls with only one mistake."

"Hel Tato" walks straight towards the bull, which glares at him a moment with his red eyes, then, using all his remaining strength, makes a furious, stumbling charge. There's the whish of a scarlet mantle—the glitter of a sword—a cloud of dust, and the beast is on his knees and broad forehead, at the feet of "Hel Tato," dead. 'Twas the only manly stroke he had received, and was rewarded with a 'urricane of applause, 'andfuls of money, and cigars enough to fill a barrow to the brim. Three mules then come dashing in at full gallop, was hitched to the bull, and whirled him off, as if he had been made o' pasteboard! Hafter that, the place was put to rights, the ladies ate oranges, and hother bulls was perjuiced. But I had had enough of Rammyres Vermijo, and Tom laughed, and said, so had *he*.

We walks away silent, when presently Tom—whose cigarette didn't seem to draw kindly—looks sideways at me, and says:

"You're disappinted, Lufkin!"

"Disappinted!" I bust out. "Say, hindignant. Hadd, ashamed! I've given countenance to a hexhibition as hatrocious as it is cowardly. I've dishonoured the name and character of the British farmer. 'Owever I shall 'old up my 'ead again, at the Salutation, I don't know. I shall blush to look my hown bulls in the face—when I think of the hend o' this one! You bring him up, from his free pastures—the brave, hunsuspectin' beast, and the use you make of his might and strength—his noble lines—his splendid dewelopment of limb and muscle—his glorious crest—his more than manly courage—is to turn him into a railed prison, theer to be prodded with pikes, scorched with fireworks, bullied, baited, and bewildered, until, blind and weak with loss of blood, he can be safely cut down by that mixture o' the monkey and the murderer you call a 'mattydoor!' Aye, Tom, if the beast could speak, that would be *his* wersion o' the sport. Hout upon such sport! It hasn't even the merit of being dangerous. Between your harmour, hosses, cloaks, squibs, noise, and numbers, its fifty to one agin the single hanimal, before hever he henters the ring.

"And, if it's cruel to the bulls, it's worse for the hosses. They can't defend theirselves, and their riders, padded as they are, think honly of their own carcases.*

"And if it's cruel to the hosses—oh Tom, Tom, it's worst cruelty of all to the women! Yes, them that flutters and fidgets most, in that 'orrible joy, bears deadliest witness against man's misleading. Hour duty is, and ever was, to restrain that spirit, heager, curious, hexcitable, that seems the 'eritage of the weak but dear companion God has given us. Is it in this Christian age and land, that we are found doing our hutmost to encourage it? No, Tom, my boy, instead of fostering in her the savage thirst of blood, show her those inevitable sufferings with which her gentle heart can sympathise, and which her tender hand can soothe. As for your hosses, instead of tearing out their hinsides, fill 'em with 'olesome food. And as for your beef, when it can't fulfil no nobler hend, why, cook it like a man, and hask *me* to dinner!"

* Mr. Lufkin's comment—correct in the main—has found an honourable exception in the person of Calderon, at present the first picador in Spain. This man occasionally rides an old white horse, perfectly blind, which he has succeeded in bringing in safety, almost without a scratch, from thirty desperate encounters. By the laws of the bull-ring, a horse that escapes in safety, from *three* conflicts, becomes the property of the rider.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER III. THE OPPORTUNITY.

MR. BOKENHAM did not improve in the estimation either of the constituency of Brocksopp, or of those in London who had the guidance of electioneering matters in the borough in the Liberal interest. The aspiring candidate was tolerably amenable at first, went down as often as the policy of such a course was suggested to him, and visited all the people whose names were on the list with which he was supplied; though his objectionable manner, and his evident lack of real interest in the place and its inhabitants, militated very much against his success. But after a little time he neglected even these slight means for cultivating popularity. A young man, with an excellent income, and with the prospect of a very large fortune on his father's death, has very little trouble in getting into such society as would be most congenial to him, more especially when that society is such as is most affected by the classes which he apes. Young Mr. Bokenham, whose chief desire in life was, as his sharp-seeing keen-witted old father said of him, to "sink the shop," laid himself out especially for the company of men of birth and position, and he succeeded in hooking himself on to one of the fastest and most raffish sets in London. The fact that he was a novus homo, and that his father was "in trade," which had caused him to be held up to ridicule at Eton, and had rendered men shy of knowing him at Christchurch, had, he was delighted to perceive, no such effect in the great city. He began with a few acquaintances picked up in public, but he speedily enlarged and improved his connexion. The majors, with the billiard-table brevet, the captains, and the shabby old bucks of St. Alban's-place, with whom Tommy Bokenham at first consorted, were soon renounced for men of a widely different stamp, so far as birth and breeding were concerned, but with much the same tastes, and more means and opportunities of gratifying them. It is probable that Mr. Bokenham owed his introduction among these scions of the upper circles to a notion, prevalent among a certain section of them, that he might be induced to plunge into the mysteries of the turf, and to bet largely, even if he did not undertake a racing establishment. But they were entirely wrong. Young Tommy had not sufficient physical go and pluck in him for anything that required energy; he commanded his position in the set in which, to his great delight, at length he found himself, by giving elaborate dinners, and occasionally lending money in moderate amounts, in return for which he was allowed to show himself in public in the company of his noble acquaintances, and was introduced by them to certain of their male and female friends, the latter of whom were especially frank and demonstrative in their reception and welcome of him.

The fascination of this kind of life, which began to dawn on young Mr. Bokenham almost concurrently with the idea of his standing for the borough of Brocksopp, soon proved to be incompatible with the proper discharge of the duties required of him as candidate. He found the necessity for frequent visits to his intended constituents becoming more and more of a nuisance to him, and entirely declined a suggestion which was made to the effect that now, as the time of the election was so near at hand, it would be advisable for him

to take up his residence at his father's house, and give his undivided attention to his canvassing. It was pointed out to him that his opponent, Mr. Creswell, was always on the spot, and, quite unexpectedly, had recently shown the greatest interest in the forthcoming struggle, and was availing himself of every means in his power to ensure his success; but Tommy Bokenham refused to "bury himself at Brocksopp," as he phrased it, until it was absolutely necessary. "It is positively cruel," wrote Mr. Harrington, a clever young clerk, who had been despatched by his principals, Messrs. Potter and Fyfe, the great parliamentary agents, to report how matters were progressing in the borough, "to see how Mr. B. is cutting out the running for the other side! I've had a talk with South, the attorney, who is acting for us down here, a shrewd, sensible fellow, and he says there is every hope of our pulling through, even as we are, but that if we had only brought another kind of man to the post, our success would be a moral." Old Mr. Potter, a very rigid old gentleman residing at Clapham, and deacon of a chapel there, growled very much, both over the matter and the manner of this communication.

"What does this young man mean," he asked, peering over the paper at his partner through his double glasses, "by using this turf slang? Bring a man to the 'post!' and a 'moral' indeed!—a word I should not have expected to find in this gentleman's vocabulary." But Mr. Fyfe, who had a sneaking likeness for sport, appeased the old gentleman, and pointed out that the letter, though oddly worded, was really full of good and reliable information, and that young Harrington had executed his commission cleverly. Both partners shook their heads over this further account of their candidate's shortcomings, and decided that some immediate steps must be taken to retrieve their position. The time of election was imminent; their opponent was resident, indefatigable, and popular; and though the report from Harrington spoke of ultimate success with almost certainty, it would not do to run the smallest risk in a borough which they had pledged their credit to wrest from Tory domination.

Messrs. Potter and Fyfe were not likely men to ventilate in public any opinions which they may have held regarding the business matters on which they were employed, but the inattention of Mr. Bokenham to his duties, and the manner in which he was throwing away his chances began to be talked of at the Comet office, and the news of it even penetrated to Jack Byrne's little club. It was on the day after he had first heard of it that the old man walked up to Joyce's chambers, and on entering found his friend at home, and glad to see him. After a little desultory conversation, old Byrne began to talk of the subject with which he was filled.

"Have you heard anything lately of that man who was going to contest your old quarters, or thereabouts, for us, Walter? What's his name? Bokenham! that's it," he said.

"Oh, yes," answered Joyce, "oddly enough, they were talking of him last night at the office. I went into O'Connor's room just as Forrest, who had come down with some not very clearly defined story from the Reform, was suggesting a slashing article with the view of what he called 'rousing to action' this very young man. O'Connor pooh-poohed the notion and put Forrest off; but from what he said to me afterwards, I imagine Mr. Bokenham is scarcely the man for the emergency—a good deal too lukewarm and dilettante. They won't stand that sort of thing in Brocksopp, and it's a point with our party, and especially with me, that Brocksopp should be won."

"Especially with you," repeated the old man; "ay, ay, I mind you saying that before! That's strong reaction from the old feeling, Walter!"

"Strong, but not unnatural, I think. You, to whom I told the story when I first knew you, will remember what my feelings were towards—towards that lady. You will remember how entirely I imagined my life bound up in hers, my happiness centred on all she might say or do. You saw what happened—how she flung me aside at the very first opportunity, with scant ceremony and shallow excuses, careless what effect her treachery might have had upon me."

"It was all for the best, lad, as it turned out."

"As it turned out, yes! But how did she know that, when she did it? Had she known that it would have turned out for the worst, for the very worst, would she have stayed her hand and altered her purpose? Not she."

"I don't like to see you vindictive, boy; recollect she's a woman, and that once you were fond of her."

"I am not vindictive, as I take it; and when I think of her treatment of me, the recollection that I was fond of her is not very likely to have a softening effect. See here, old friend, in cold blood, and with due deliberation, Marian Ashurst extin-

guished what was then the one light in my sufficiently dreary life. Fortune has given me the chance, I think, of returning the compliment, and I intend to do it."

Jack Byrne turned uneasily in his chair; it was evident that his sentiments were not in accord with those of his friend. After a minute's pause, he said, "Even supposing that the old eye for eye and tooth for tooth retribution were allowable—which I am by no means disposed to grant, especially where women are concerned—are you quite sure that in adopting it you are getting at what you wish to attain? You have never said so, but it must be as obvious to you, as it is to me, that Mrs. Creswell does not care for her husband. Do you think, then, she will be particularly influenced by a matter in which his personal vanity is alone involved?"

Joyce smiled somewhat grimly. "My dear old friend, it was Mrs. Creswell's ambition that dealt me what might have been my coup de grace. My anxiety about this contest at Brocksopp springs from my desire to wound Mrs. Creswell's ambition. My knowledge of that lady is sufficient to prove to me, as clearly as though I were in her most sacred confidence, that she is most desirous that her husband should be returned to Parliament. The few words that were dropped by that idiot Bokenham the other day, pointed to this, but I should have been sure of it if I had not heard them. After all, it is the natural result, and what might have been expected. During her poverty her prayer was for money. Money acquired, another want takes its place, and so it will be to the end of the chapter."

As Joyce ceased speaking there was a knock at the door, and Jack Byrne opening it, admitted young Mr. Harrington, the confidential clerk of Messrs. Potter and Fyfe. Young Mr. Harrington was festively attired in a garb of sporting cut, and wore his curved-rimmed hat on the top of his right ear, but there was an unusual, anxious look in his face, and he showed signs of great mental perturbation, not having, as he afterwards allowed to his intimate friends, "been so thoroughly knocked out of time since Magsman went a mucker for the Two Thou'." This perturbation was at once noticed by Mr. Byrne.

"Ah, Mr. Harrington," said he; "glad to see you, sir. Not looking quite so fresh as usual," he added, with a cynical grin. "What's the matter, nothing wrong in the great turf world, I trust? Sister to Sauce-box has not turned out a roarer, or Billy Billingsgate broken down badly?"

"Thank you very much for your kind inquiries, Mr. Byrne," said Mr. Harrington, eyeing the old man steadily without changing a muscle of his face. "I'll not forget to score up one to you, sir, and I'll take care to repay you that little funniment on the first convenient opportunity. Just now, I've got something else in hand. Look here, let's stow this gaff! Mr. Joyce, my business is with you. The fact is, there is an awful smash-up at Brocksopp, and my governors want to see you at once."

"At Brocksopp?" said Joyce, with a start. "A smash at Brocksopp?"

"Yes," said Mr. Harrington. "The man that we were all depending on, young Mr. Bokenham, has come to grief."

"Dead?" exclaimed old Byrne.

"O no, not at all; political, rather than social grief, I should have said. The fact is, so far as we can make out, Lord and Lady Steppe—you know Lady Steppe, Mr. Joyce, or, at all events, your friend Shimmer of the Comet could tell you all about her, she was Miss Tentose in the ballet at the Lane—have persuaded our sucking senator to go to Egypt with them for the winter. Lady S.'s influence is great in that quarter I understand—so great that he pitches up Brocksopp, and lets us all slide!"

"Given up Brocksopp?" said old Byrne.

"Chucked up his cards, sir," said Harrington, "when the game was in his hand. My governors' people are regularly up a tree, cornered, and all that, so they want to see you, Mr. Joyce, at once, and have sent me to fetch you."

"To fetch him! Potter and Fyfe of Abingdon-street have sent you to fetch him!" cried old Byrne, in great excitement. "Walter, do you think——do you recollect what I said to you some time ago? Can it be that it's coming on now?"

Joyce made him no verbal reply, but he grasped his old friend's hand warmly, and immediately afterwards started off with Mr. Harrington in the hansom cab which that gentleman had waiting at the door.

The idea that had flashed through old Jack Byrne's mind, preposterously exaggerated as it had at first seemed to him, was nevertheless correct. When Joyce arrived at Messrs. Potter and Fyfe's office, he found there, not merely those gentlemen, but, with them, several of the leading members of the party, and a deputation of two or three Liberals from Brocksopp, with whom Joyce was acquainted. Mr. Moule and Mr. Spalding, nervously excited, stepped forward, and shook hands with the young man in

a jerky kind of manner. Immediately afterwards, backing again towards their chairs, on the extremest edge of which they propped themselves, they hid their hands in their coat-sleeves, and looked round in a furtive manner.

After a few formal speeches, Mr. Potter proceeded at once to business. Addressing Joyce, he said it was probably known to him that the gentleman on whom they had hitherto depended as a candidate for Brocksopp had thrown them over, and, at the eleventh hour, had left them to seek for another representative. In a few well-chosen and diplomatically-rounded sentences, Mr. Potter pointed out that the task that Mr. Bokenham had imposed upon them was by no means so difficult a one as might have been imagined. Mr. Potter would not, he said, indulge in any lengthened speech. His business was simply to explain the wishes of those for whom he and his partner had the honour to act—here he looked towards the leaders of the party, who did not attempt to disguise the fact that they were growing rather bored by the Potterian eloquence—and those wishes were, in so many words, that Mr. Joyce should step into the place which Mr. Bokenham had left vacant.

One of the leaders of the party here manifesting an intention of having something to say, and wishing to say it, Mr. Fyfe promptly interposed with the remark that he should be able to controvert an assertion, which he saw his young friend Mr. Joyce about to make, to the effect that he would be unable to carry on the contest for want of means. He, Mr. Fyfe, was empowered to assert that old Mr. Bokenham was so enraged at his son's defalcation, which he believed to have been mainly brought about by Tory agency, Lord Steppe's father, the Earl of Stair, being a notoriously bigotted Blue, that he was prepared to guarantee the expenses of any candidate approved of by the party and by the town. Mr. Fyfe here pausing to take breath, the leader, who had been previously baulked, cut in with a neat expression of the party's approval of Mr. Joyce, and Mr. Spalding murmured a few incoherent words to the effect that, during a life-long acquaintance with his young friend, the people of Brocksopp had been in entire ignorance that he had anything in him, politically or otherwise, beyond book learning, and that was the main reason for their wishing him to represent them in Parliament.

Although a faint dawning of the truth had come across him when Mr. Harrington announced young Bokenham's defection, Walter Joyce had no definite idea of the honour in store for him. Very modestly, and in very few words, he accepted the candidature, promising to use every exertion for the attainment of success. He was too much excited and overcome to enter into any elaborate discussion at that time. All he could do was to thank the leading members of the party for their confidence, to inform the parliamentary-agent firm that he would wait upon them the next day, and to assure Messrs. Spalding and Moule that the Liberals of Brocksopp would find him among them immediately. Did Walter Joyce falter for one instant in the scheme of retribution which he had foreshadowed, now that he was to be its exponent, now that the vengeance which he had anticipated, was to be worked out by himself? No! On the contrary, he was more satisfied in being able to assure himself of the edge of the weapon, and of the strength of the arm by which the blow should be dealt.

"We calculated too soon upon the effect of young Bokenham's escapade, darling," said Mr. Creswell to his wife, on his return after a day in Brocksopp. "The field is by no means to be left clear to us. The walls of the town are blazing with the placards of a new candidate in the Liberal interest, a clever man, I believe, who is to have all the elder Bokenham's backing, and who, from previous connexion, may probably have certain local interests of his own."

"Previous connexion — local interest? Who can it be?" asked Marian.

"An old acquaintance of yours, I should imagine; at least the name is familiar to me in connexion with your father, and the old days of Helmingham school. The signature to the address is 'Walter Joyce.'"

FRENCH COURTS OF JUSTICE.

A MORE striking and suggestive contrast, than that between the French and the English judicial tribunals, it would be difficult to find; or one more clearly marking the striking difference in temperament and mode of thought between the two races. The forms of French legal procedure aid in giving a romantic character to the scenes which pass in the Palais de Justice. The Procureur Impérial, combining in himself the powers of public prosecutor, grand jury, and adviser of the bench, is an official quite unknown to Anglo-Saxon countries; for his office implies a great deal more than those

of our attorneys and solicitors-general. At the opening of criminal trials, the procureur proceeds to read a long and minute narrative of the previous life, habits, and character of the accused, which has been collected with great care. He relates the career of the prisoner with a dramatic force worthy of a novelist, and seems as anxious to construct an interesting story as to produce a practical impression on the minds of the jury. The theatrical character of the scene is kept up by the French custom of questioning the prisoner as well as the witnesses, hearing his statements, allowing him to interrogate the witnesses, or to explain away their evidence, and not very sternly checking him when he indulges in pathetic appeals, in untimely jokes, or energetic recriminations. The judge for his part makes remarks very freely, does not stick at a pun or a joke with the counsel, or even with the prisoner, and engages in altercations with both.

The French are so sensitive to anything droll; they are so quick to seize the ludicrous aspect of any matter and make the most of it, that no opportunity for amusement is allowed to pass, no matter how serious the trial or the circumstances. Some two years ago a trial took place at Melun, near Fontainebleau, which excited a keen interest throughout France. One Madame Frigard, a sprightly woman of forty, the mother of a family, was arraigned for the murder of a Madame Mertens. The two were very intimate friends. Mertens was young, pretty, of loose morals, and possessed of money; they went for a day's excursion into the forest of Fontainebleau. Frigard returned to Paris in the evening alone; for some time the friends of Mertens were puzzled to know what had become of her. In a week her body was found lying in the depths of the forest. Meanwhile Frigard was found in possession of some funds belonging to her friend. The greatest excitement prevailed during the trial of Frigard for her life. But the gravity which might be expected in a murder trial was wholly wanting; to read the reports in the newspapers, you would have thought that a comedy was being enacted in the snug Melun Palais de Justice. The spectators were kept in continual high spirits by the witty sallies of the judge and the lawyers, and the bright naïve responses of the fair accused. Her repartees were greeted with roars of applause and laughter; and some of the dialogues which took place might have made Feuillet envious, and furnished Sardou with a stock of fresh piquancy and wit. The trial ended in the conviction of Frigard, and her condemnation to hard labour for life; yet on hearing the sentence she tossed her head, said something pertly humorous to the judge as she left the dock, and went smiling and flippant to her doom.

The smaller courts in the towns, where lighter every-day offences are tried, are usually the most interesting to the foreign visitor. These courts are usually situated either in the basement of the Palais de Justice, or in some obscure street. You are free to enter, and find yourself in a small, close, not sweet smelling room. You take up your position, standing, behind some railings—for spectators are seldom accorded the privilege of seats. At a square raised desk, over which appears the Imperial escutcheon, is seated the presiding judge. He wears a long puffy gown of silk, with a broad white cravat, while his head is adorned by a singular hat, large and square, broader at the top than at the bottom, and lined—as well as you can see—with some lace, not of the finest. On the judge's right is another smaller raised desk, at right angles with that of the judge; this is the place occupied by the procureur. Below the judge are the clerks, and in a semicircle in front of the clerks sit the avocats, avoués, and notaries—the barristers and attorneys. The prisoner is placed on a chair in a small enclosed space, his counsel sitting by him; the jury is at the side, seated on long narrow benches. There is a witness-stand near the judge, as in England.

The judge takes his seat, the court is formally opened, and the witnesses and prisoners are called in. The first prisoner put into the dock is a pretty, lively, flashily-dressed, saucy-looking grisette. She takes her place with a little shrug of the shoulders and a grimace, and looks about coquettishly. The judge eyes her sharply for a moment, and then asks what she is charged with. "Mademoiselle, Monsieur le Juge, is charged with stealing a fifty-franc note from her most intimate and confidential friend." Information as to mademoiselle's antecedents and position is at once forthcoming. Mademoiselle's name is Adrienne Petitbouche; she trims bonnets for the great Madame Picot by day; she flirts with her mignon Jacques by twilight; she literally "shakes a foot," and a lithe little body too, every night at the Bal de la Terpsichore Divine—admission, one franc. On the whole, barring her daily task, she has a very careless, merry, wicked, delirious life of it. Her money melts like snow in a furnace; she often finds herself minus the cash for a new dancing-skirt, and, unhappily, Jacques is too poor to supply it. She, therefore, quietly slips into her darling Philomène's room—opposite to her own, and quietly abstracts the fifty-franc note which Philomène has just received as her monthly wages, and has stowed away in her trunk. Philomène catches her coming out of the door, misses her fifty francs, and has dear Adrienne brought up before the court.

Philomène is the first witness, and skips to the witness-box, brisk, prompt, and pert. Questioned indiscriminately by judge, jury, procureur, counsel, and prisoner, she answers smartly, with tosses of the head. She says she saw Mademoiselle Adrienne coming out of the room; her trunk was open; on the floor near it was Mademoiselle Adrienne's new silver thimble. Here the prisoner breaks in:

"Yes, the hussy borrowed it of me the day before yesterday."

"It's a lie! I didn't—you know I didn't!"

"Monsieur the Judge——"

"Now, hush, hush, hush!" (from the judge).

"Go on, witness."

"The concierge saw her going into my room just before."

"Aha, m'amie!" breaks in the judge; "what do you say to that?"

"I went in there," says the prisoner, shortly, "because I thought somebody was there. I heard a noise."

Judge: "Yes—a rustle of fifty-franc notes!" (Great laughter.)

A witness deposes that, next day, Mademoiselle Adrienne bought a handsome new bonnet.

"And where, m'amie," said the judge, "did you get all the money for *that?*"

"One has friends."

"Come, come, where did you get it?"

"Parbleu! it was Jacques."

"And who, pray, is Jacques?"

"My Jacques—my friend, monsieur."

"O, your lover, n'est-ce pas?"

"Ah, well, yes, Monsieur the Judge!"

"And so Jacques is rich, is he?"

"No, but he gave it to me."

"Has his rich aunt just died?" (General amusement.)

For all her bright eyes and pretty little shrugs, poor Adrienne is clearly guilty. The judge, after stating the fact, proceeds to sentence her, somewhat after this manner:

"Now, ma jolie petite fille, I must send you to lodgings where fine bonnets are wholly needless; you must go to the workhouse for a little month. You won't want any of Jacques's money for that. And I warn you not to mind whatever noises you may hear, or run after them; for you see what a position you are in from being too anxious about noises in your neighbour's room."

With this sally the trial ends, and the proceedings are concluded in the pleasantest of humours. Mademoiselle trips, with another shrug, out of the box; gives the disconsolate Jacques, who is by, a hearty kiss, bobs her head saucily at the judge, and surrenders herself gracefully to her fate.

But the scenes which take place in the French courts are as various as the traits and impulses of the French themselves—only having this in common, that they are seldom without a dramatic tinge. Some months ago the following incident took place in one of the smaller Paris police-courts. A young man—one Mignoneau—was brought before the judge accused of having received some money from a veteran, by name Monsieur Leger, on false pretences. The trial began, and the injured gentleman was called upon to take the witness-stand. A robust, hale old man forthwith separated himself from the crowd of spectators, advanced promptly to the stand, made an exceedingly courtly bow to Monsieur the Judge, and awaited the interrogatory. His testimony, delivered in a clear voice and with great frankness, was worth noting.

"What is your age?" sharply demands the judge.

"Ninety-eight and a half years," replies the old man, slowly and emphatically.

"You express yourself so distinctly, you seem so healthy, your colour is so fresh, your eyes are so bright, and your step is so firm, that I must have misunderstood you."

"No. What I say is accurate. Count and see. I was born in May, 1770; a year and a half, Monsieur le Judge, will complete my century."

"What is your occupation?"

"I was formerly valet to Monsieur Saint Prix, comedian to the king, at the Théâtre de la Nation."

"You were then very young. You must have served others since?"

Leger, drawing himself up proudly: "Never, monsieur. M. Saint Prix left me enough to live on. When a man has had such a master, he does not need a second."

"Now, as to this case. Do you recognise the young man in the dock?"

"I recollect him, yes. He did an act which was not at all delicate. He pretended he had come from my marble cutter, and claimed thirty francs for a railing round my wife's tomb."

"Your wife?"

"I had the misfortune to lose her, monsieur, a few months since."

"She was doubtless much younger than yourself?"

"Very little, Monsieur the Judge; only fifteen months. I used to say to her, 'Wait a little for me, and we will go together.' But she wearied of the world before me."

"You paid this young man what he demanded?"

"Yes; but I did not bring him here. I hope you will not punish him too severely. Perhaps he will turn from his wicked ways, and give me back my money. Such a thing has happened within my own knowledge. M. Saint Prix had a cook who stole from him; he pardoned her, and she became honest."

A genial correspondent has depicted a scene which occurred not long ago in one of the Paris courts, so thoroughly characteristic that it affords an irresistible opportunity for quotation. A young workman of jovial disposition got tipsy at a little buvette; while there, he picked up a fascinating stranger, whom he generously invited to partake of his humble couch for the night. The fascinating stranger accepted with rapture; next day the stranger is invited to appear at court, to answer a charge of having stolen certain moneys from his host's *boots*. The confiding young man was examined.

"I went to bed in my clothes."

"Ah, you were regularly drunk?"

"Truly, monsieur."

"So drunk, that you could not undress?"

"Well—yes; I have been drunker, however."

"Where did you leave your money?"

"In my left boot, with my handkerchief on it, and then put it on."

"And he robbed you while you were asleep?"

"Yes: he took all but half a franc."

"He took off your boot without your knowing it?"

"Yes: emptied it, and put it on me again."

The prisoner is examined; says he was restless, and couldn't sleep.

"My francs kept you awake," says prosecutor, indignant.

"No! your fleas did," retorts the prisoner.

Then prisoner, grandiloquent in the midst of misfortune—what Frenchman is not?—proceeds to address the gentlemen of the jury in his defence: "Gentlemen, you see me here; but if I had not come here till I deserved it, I should be walking the streets at this moment, breathing the free air of heaven. Monsieur, this false young man says I have stolen from him. Grand Dieu! Am I then a patent boot-jack? I ask Monsieur the Judge; could I take off *your* boots, and put them on again, while you were asleep in bed?" (Sensation.)

"But, unhappy me, voyez-vous, I was drunk," responds prosecutor. "I slept so sound that I strained the ropes of my bed."

"Monsieur, you should blush to accuse me. Your money is the coinage of a wine-heated brain. Gentlemen, I have served in the National Guard Mobile; had I been capable of subtracting filthy francs from the boots of a fellow-creature, should I not have been drummed out?"

But prisoner is deemed guilty.

"Monsieur the Judge, a little word."

"Well."

"Do with me as you please; I am equal to either fortune."

Not the least interesting are the political trials; these are constantly occurring, owing to the invincible pugnacity of French journalists and the fondness which French editors have for martyrdom, though it be but on a small scale. St. Pélagie is never without guests who boast themselves "knights of the quill;" and although these persecuted gentlemen are usually "dynastic opposers," once in a while we find the too-hot adherents of the empire—Granier de Cassagnac, for instance—incarcerated with the rest. It requires no very subtle insight into the Imperial Constitution to see that the courts are wholly under the political influence of Monsieur the Minister of the Interior, who, being irresponsible, nods or shakes his head after Monseigneur the Emperor. Although the trials for political offences seldom miscarry, and although—what fatally hurts your ordinary drama—their dénouement is clearly foreseen at the outset, the scenes in court are rendered piquant by the accused themselves, who, knowing there is no help for them, give full rein to their wit and satire, in spite of judge, minister, or majesty. Perhaps the trials for political offences which take place in the remote provinces, far from Paris, are the most interesting. Before the right of public meeting had been extended to its present state—and even now it is so hedged about as to appear to the Anglo-Saxon looker-on a mere phantom right after all—the political passions of the people, and the political propagandism of the Opposition chiefs, were wont to find an outlet by means of these very political trials. Jules Favre, and Thiers, and Berryer, could not, without infringing the law, address their adherents assembled in public squares or in popular halls, on the political issues of the day; so they simply did it in the face of the Imperial judges, and protected by the privileges which in France, as elsewhere, belong to the lawyer's robe. This mode of propagating ideas hostile to the empire was, and still is, a formidable one. A provincial editor writes a slashing article, saying that "Solferino was won in spite of bad generalship" (allusive to the Emperor's part therein); or that "the republic was assassinated by the existing powers." He is forthwith indicted by the Procureur Impérial for "exciting to hatred and contempt of the government," or "an assault upon the person of his Majesty." The editor expected this, and is rejoiced to receive the summons to appear in court. He forthwith sends to M. Jules Favre, the modern Mirabeau, engages him as counsel, and announces in his columns that the great democratic advocate is to defend him. When the day comes, great crowds of people surround the court-house, and there is no preventing them from pushing through the corridors, and filling the court-room to its utmost capacity. When the advocate arrives, and descends from his carriage, the outside crowd greet him with cries of "Vive Jules Favre!" "Vive la liberté!" "A bas la tyrannie!" to all of which the deputy blandly smiles, and bows this way and that. His progress to the court-room is a continued ovation.

The case comes on for trial: Monsieur the Procureur has unfolded it with dramatic force; the testimony is given on one side and the other; the counsel for the prosecution "orates and gyrates;" then it is the turn of M. Favre to develop his defence. The crowd hangs on his lips breathlessly; M. the Procureur, and even M. the Judge, are slightly nervous; the orator raises his voice. His speech is simply and purely a political harangue, a terrible arraignment of the empire, and a general indictment against its career. Neither he nor his client cares a rush how the case goes, nor what the damages are; they are already victorious, for they have won the right to be publicly heard, unrestricted. An audience, sympathetic and enthusiastic in the highest degree, listens; the mouths of judge and prosecutor are stopped; the orator, forgetful of his case, inculcates his favourite doctrines unrestrained. If the judge, finding the harangue a little too strong, interrupt, he is met by a scathing retort, which, if he be not a very uncommon magistrate indeed, effectually teaches him not to interfere again. The editor is convicted, pays a fine (which a zealous party subscription speedily makes up), or goes to prison for a month or two; where he has the double satisfaction of being a martyr, and of complacently reflecting, that he has done more for his cause than a hundred perfectly lawful leaders could have done. It is well known that Berryer, up to his death, used to, and that Favre still does, make a regular progress through pro-

vincial France, in the recess of the Legislative Body, engaged ostensibly to defend oppressed editors and patriots whose enthusiasm has overstepped the law, but really in a campaign of political opposition to the present régime. Emile Ollivier, less adroit than his colleagues, by this course provoked his dismissal from the bar. Thus the French, who love excitement, have plenty of it in the summer, during the assizes; thus, in spite of the repressive policy of the government, ideas hostile to it penetrate the mass under the protection of the very law itself.

LEADING AND DRIVING.

"WILL they let us down? Yes, if you treat them—say, half a dozen of brandy—I think they are twenty-four partners in all—four men to a bottle."

The scene was Ballarat, a few yards from one of its most ordinary features—the tall brick chimney and large irregular wooden shanty, or shedding, marking the site of a deep underground claim. The speaker was my landlord, who had kindly driven me over in his own pony phaeton, from the hotel to "Frenchman's Lead"—a line of gold workings some three or four years opened up, and now in active operation.

The chimney of this shanty is not an unhandsome structure. All round, for miles upon miles, we see hundreds of such chimneys; and, if we trace them more closely, find them adhering, with greater or less irregularity, to certain curving and meandering lines, which are the various leads composing the Ballarat deep sinkings. A lead may be of any length from half a mile to six miles. It obeys no law, that has ever yet been discovered: it turns and twists; it throws off branches, and takes them back again; it goes under a hill, and crosses a valley; it turns back on itself; it leaves you unexpectedly in the lurch, and resumes its course in the very last place you would have dreamt of; it crosses other leads, as the gentlemen of the Ballarat long robe have good reason to know to their profit. Two or three leads pass right under the town of Ballarat itself—(city, I believe, I should now call it)—my landlord's hotel is built over one of them. The surface of the ground affords no possible indication that a lead is, or is not, beneath it. The miner must just "chance" his claim as Fortune directs—about fifty yards lineal, in a *straight* line, to each partner, according to the new Frontage Act. When he has got down, say four hundred feet, to the supposed level of the lead, he must look for it—north, south, east, or west, as the same fortune may direct. By the terms of the Frontage Act, he knows that no one is permitted to come between his shaft and the lead, whatever its distance may be—without this deep-sinking would be the veriest of gambling. Going down is called sinking—looking north, south, east, or west for the lead, when you have got down, is called driving. If a miner strikes the lead he is rewarded, generally amply. If he don't strike the lead, he gets nothing at all. He ought to go down in about twelve months; an unusual quantity of subterranean water, or rock strata, may make it two or three years. Driving is, of course, according to circumstances. Some have the luck to "drop on" the gutter, or central gold-yielding line of the lead, but they are very few. More often the water gets ahead of the work, and the claim is abandoned.

We enter the somewhat rude congregation of sheds, constituting the surface portion of the "Great extended claim," Frenchman's Lead, Ballarat—and stand over the shaft.

A hot, moist vapour rises out of it, like smoke out of a chimney. We gaze down into pitchy darkness—we hear only the dreadful "plump" of a drop of water falling into some receptacle below, and imagination alone assists us to conceive the operations going on beneath. The shaft is a square box, formed of the iron-hard, and iron-heavy, blue gum of the country, and is without lid and without bottom. This box is about three feet square and four hundred deep.

A few yards from it stands the engine; the most important piece of mechanism connected with the claim. The engine lets you down and up the shaft; pumps up water, and sends down fresh air; hauls up the excavated soil (or headings) which is to be thrown away, and also the washing-stuff which is not to be thrown away, until it has passed through a very careful process; then it turns to, and goes through the process of puddling, washing, and cradling the gold from the washing-stuff. There is a large arm-chair beside the much-performing engine, in which a large, fat man sits. You are particularly requested not to speak to the man in the arm-chair, who, by-the-by, does not appear to invite conversation: if you talk loud, or make other noise, he looks less inviting still. That man is all ear—nothing else—when on duty. From the bottom of the shaft a wire extends to the arm-chair, and executes a very audible knock there—one, two, three, &c., as the case may be. Such is the simple code of signals to which, and to which only, the man in the arm-chair is bound to attend. Nay, lest in the confusion of the day, or silent watches of the night (most of these deep claims work night and day) any temporary forgetfulness of their interpretation should occur to him, the code itself is written out on a large black board with white letters suspended straight before him, thus:

One knock	Man coming up.
Two knocks	Heading.
Three knocks	Washing stuff.

And so on. Inattention is homicide, unless you choose to call it murder, which a Ballarat jury would be very likely to do.

Around lie the various tanks, tubs, and implements for puddling, washing, and separating the gold. Immense stacks of wood lie ready for the consumption of the engine. Other wood, in slabs, is ready for "boxing" the drives in

process of formation. Ever and anon, a huge bucket of washing stuff, a mixture of thick, putty-like mud, stones, and gold, comes to the mouth of the shaft, is tilted into the puddling tank, and takes its share in the never-ending process of being separated into gold and tailings—vast hills of these tailings lie all around. John Chinaman puts them through a second process, and generally manages to "get a living" out of them. Johnny does not go in for deep sinking. The over-ground men proceed with their operations in comparative silence.

My landlord is speaking apart to the manager. We are to go down. We retire to the shift-room—I, my fellow-traveller Brown, my landlord, and the manager. The shift-room is about twelve feet square, and all round the walls are hung a most varied assortment of oil-skin coats, oil-skin inexpressibles, and oil-skin hats, all slop made, baggy, and mud-begrimed. We retire, or make believe of retiring, into corners, and change.

I reappear first. Enter next to me Brown, decidedly villanous-looking, then the manager, who wears his garments gracefully and professionally, last, my landlord, who, having fallen somewhat into flesh, would appear to have had some difficulty with his shift, if, at least, I might judge from certain expletives proceeding from his corner, which it is unnecessary for me here to repeat. At length, our number is complete, or, as Brown conveys to me in a stage whisper, "Enter fourth murderer," and we return to the mouth of the shaft.

This time, the bottomless box has a lid—a square, blue-gum plank, some two inches thick, fitting it exactly; that is, if the rope from the engine were severed, it would drop to the bottom. A stout iron rail rises from this plank, and at right angles to its surface, to the height of about four feet, separating it into two equal compartments. It has no other protection—in fact, consists of nothing else. I and Brown take our stand on one compartment, my landlord and the manager on the other, opposite, with our hands on the iron rail which divides us, and rises breast high. We are thus staring into each other's faces—two and two. There are four hundred feet of empty space beneath us; imagine yourself standing on the golden ball of St. Paul's, with a two-inch wooden platform between you and the churchyard, instead of the present substantial structure. The manager nods to the man in the arm-chair, and says "lower." The man in the arm-chair pulls a tap, and we are lowered. Engine, men, and puddling machines disappear from our view, silently and slowly. Yes, our motion at first is slow; nevertheless, the light diminishes with awful rapidity. I can barely see the faces of my three companions, and then I can see nothing: absolutely nothing. We are now moving more swiftly, very swiftly. It is impossible to give any description of the utter darkness; no shutting your eyes, no cellar, no railway tunnel would be of the least avail. We don't speak. I find a difficulty in believing that three heads are within a few inches of my own, that I am staring into my landlord's face; my companions appear to be miles and miles away. There is nothing heard save the dripping of water, and the grating, now and again, of our descending square platform against the sides of the bottomless box. We *can't* fall off—that is one comfort; a pin could scarcely insert itself between platform and box. What if the man in the arm-chair should miscalculate the distance, and bump us violently against the bottom!

Our rapid descent is checked, and we are bumped against the bottom; but so very gently that I doubt if we should have cracked a hazel nut if had been beneath our platform. We are now in a very blaze of light. Candles—wax candles—are fixed all round the walls of the room (or chamber) which we find ourselves in the midst of. Some half dozen trucks, loaded with washing stuff and headings, carry candles in front of them; about the same number of men, scattered in various attitudes through the chamber, have lighted candles fastened to their felt hats; and several avenues (the drives), opening off in various directions from the chamber, all possess candles in tin sconces, arranged at regular intervals along their walls. These men are evidently off work; some are eating, some smoking, and some taking a half-sleeping, half-waking rest, preparatory to resuming operations in the drives. The walls and roof of the chamber are all strongly and closely boxed, in the same manner as the shaft. So also are the various drives diverging from the chamber, as long as they take their course through loose, crumbling soil; where they pass through solid rock this becomes unnecessary. The labour of this boxing alone must have been immense.

"So," said the manager, as we alighted, and addressing me, "you have come down a little more quickly and easily than the original workers of the claim. How long do you think we took to get this far? Two years and over. We went through three beds of solid bluestone rock, fifty, thirty, and sixty-five feet—all blasting, every inch of it: with water between each pair enough to turn a pretty tidy mill. We passed through two shifting sands—all double boxing; and were driven out, a whole winter. Then our money ran out—and we had empty pockets and a flooded claim. Didn't that beat us? Not a bit of it. That's no unusual thing in Ballarat—we have a system to meet that. You show any substantial storekeeper in Ballarat that you have a promising claim on a known lead, and he'll advance you food, tools, and pumping gear for six, twelve, and eighteen months.* Well, we had to go to the storekeepers (the first week's washing paid *them* off) and we got down here, where we're now standing."

"And then?" said my landlord, to whom the story was evidently a familiar one, and

* Latterly, the banks also advance to large amounts—as high as five thousand pounds.

who merely threw in a word to modify the purely monologue form of the narrative.

"Ay—and then"—said the manager, accepting the cue—"we knew we were pretty much about the level of the gutter; and that was all we did know, for we were early on the lead, and no one had bottomed within a mile or so of us. In fact, it was a toss up; some said we were to the north of the gutter, and more said we were to the south of it. Anyhow, the norths carried it, and we struck out north. Look here"—and the manager opened a large iron door, embedded in the northern wall of the chamber. It disclosed a drive, dark, winding, and water-dripping—and to all appearances quite deserted. "You may follow that drive for some half-mile, if you have a mind to—*I* haven't: it cost us too much time, labour, and argument already, and I hate the sight of it. We spent close on a twelvemonth over it, for it was all through slate-rock, and then the norths gave in. Here is another drive," continued the manager, opening a second door, and disclosing a second tunnel, dark, winding, water-dripping, and deserted. "We spent a pretty tidy time over this one too: it led to no gutter, but still it wasn't exactly lost time. After we had gone on some distance with it, and found nothing promising, we agreed to branch off at an angle of forty-five. We hadn't gone long on this tack, when we found the bed-rock dipping (about the best sign a miner has to go by) east by south. That was enough for us—we knew the gutter was to the south of the shaft, if it was anywhere. We came back to the chamber, and opened a drive twenty-five degrees east of south. That brought us straight across the gutter, and is now our main drive. We struck the gutter three and a quarter years after we had turned the first sod."

"Then you use more than one drive?"

"More than one or two men can't well work in a drive. We open off branch drives to attack upper and lower parts of the gutter, when we know its whereabouts."

Provided with candles, we proceed down the main drive. The incline was so slight as to be only appreciable by aid of the spirit level. The centre of the drive was occupied by a rude tramway, with rails of blue gum, on which the trucks conveyed washing-stuff, headings, &c., to the shaft run. The incline was sufficient to carry the empty trucks back; the full ones were pushed forward by the men. Between the trucks and the damp dripping walls of the drive there was barely room to pass. The roof was just high enough to permit a tall man to stand upright. The whole of this drive was well boxed, sides and roof. The close steaming atmosphere became hotter and hotter (but for the friendly engine, which was incessantly sending down great puffs of fresh air along the whole drive, existence could not be prolonged). The noise of pick and shovel waxed louder and louder. The drive opened out into a vast yawning cavern, and we stood on the verge of the veritable gutter, the much desired central line of the lead.

Great portion of this gutter had already been cleared away—cleared carefully down to the bed-rock, and the hollows, cavities, and crevices of the rock itself cleaned and swept. In this manner we were able to cross over from bank to bank, if I may use the term. It took me about ten paces to cross over at this point. Above and below, the gutter remained untouched, and the men were now employed in transferring portions of it to the trucks by aid of pick and shovel. About four feet was regarded as washing-stuff; the remaining four feet to the roof of the cavern thus in process of formation was accounted worthless headings; still it had to be drawn to the shaft's mouth to make room. The precious washing-stuff (I was given to understand it was very precious, but any minute inquiries on this point are not strictly in accordance with goldfields' etiquette) was nothing very dazzling to look at. It consisted of the aforesaid thick, putty-like mud, rounded pebbles of all sizes in the utmost profusion, and watery ooze, all mixed up together. In fact, its whole aspect resembled that of a river-bed which had been covered up for ages.

Owing to certain bends and turns traced out in the lead, the company calculated on having a mile and a half of gutter, and work for the next eight or ten years. An ordinary week's washing, I was informed, produced fifty pounds (sterling) per man. The claim had yielded fifty thousand pounds up to the period of my visit. Two thousand pounds would be readily given for a share—not twenty readily accepted; in fact, they were not "in the market."

The proposition of the brandy was received with a certain dignified independence; nevertheless, the brandy was not rejected.

HAMPTON COURT.

The windows of the Fountain Court
Are glittering in the moon,
But no more in the palace hall
You hear the dance and tune—
No more beyond dim corridors
Lamps spread a golden noon.

No longer from half open doors
Bursts forth a gust of song;
No longer with a roll of drums,
Sweeps by a silken throng,
With diamond stars keen glittering,
The ribbons blue among.

No pages bearing each a torch,
Now scale the lofty stair;
No ladies trip with wealth of pearls,
Banding their wealth of hair;
No white-capped cook, with flaming face,
Bears up the dish with care.

The swarthy king with heavy brows,
Paces no more the court;
Base Rochester and Killigrew
Have long since ceased to sport.
No more fair wantons at the cards
Think the long night too short.

Silent the court, and still the hall,
Lights long ago put out,
The colour's faded from the silks
That deck the walls about;
No longer at the outer gates
The noisy rabble shout.

Yet still within the fountain pool,
The gold fish steer and swim,
As when King Charles with jewelled hand
Stood paddling at the brim;
At Charing-cross he's safe in bronze,
No danger more from him!

Yet still in lonely evening hours,
When the moon has long gone in,
You hear the fountain's ceaseless tears,
As for some hopeless sin;
And far without the nightingale
Of past grief warbling.

THE WOMAN QUESTION IN BLACK LETTER.

The woman question has always been one of the legal and social difficulties of Christendom. In times when might was right, and the weakest went to the wall, women were simply the prey of the strongest; and though chivalry was instituted as much to protect them as for the maintenance of knightly exercises, they were nevertheless but poorly championed against the brutality of men and the oppression of laws, and for the most part were treated, as they were regarded, like inferiors and chattels. By degrees more generous counsels prevailed, the woman question came in for a share of the more liberal feeling afloat, the legal rights of women were enlarged on the ground of abstract justice, and not merely because women were the wives and mothers of men.

A curious old black-letter book,* professing to be the "woman's lawyer," sets forth their legal condition as well as the state of public feeling regarding them in Queen Elizabeth's time. The statement why the book was written at all, has that strange non-sequitur flavour in it to be found in much old reasoning. "Before the world was seven daies old, masculum et fœminam fecit eos, of which division because the first part that wee say hath least judgement and discretion to be a Lawe unto it selfe (women, onely women), they have nothing to do in constituting Lawes or consenting to them, in interpreting of Lawes, or in hearing them interpreted at Lectures, leets, or charges; and yet they stand strictly tyed to men's establishments, little or nothing excused by ignorance, mee thinks it were pitty and impiety any longer to hold from them such Customes, Lawes, and Statutes as in a manner proper or principally belonging unto them." Speaking of men and women being only one, and of the consequent merging of the woman in the man, the anonymous author says: "A married woman perhaps may either doubt whether she bee either none or no more than half a person. But let her bee of good cheare;" for many affairs in life she will be found a whole person, and to be dealt with accordingly. Again, with a prophetic glance onward at the Miss Beckers and the Revising Barristers of the future, he says: "Women have no voyse in Parliament. They make no Lawes, they consent to none, they abrogate none. All of them are understood either married or to bee married, and their desires are subject to their husband. I know no remedy, though some women can shift it well enough. The Common Law here shaketh hands with Divinitie, but because I am come too soone to the title of Baron and feme, and Adam and Eve were the first and last that were married so young, it is best that I runne back again to consider of the things (which I might seeme to have lost by the way) that are fit to bee known concerning women before they bee fit for marriage." And the first thing to be known is the age at which they may be married.

Now, it appears that a woman has "divers special ages" in the matters of marriage and guardianship, and they are these:—the chief thing that strikes us when we read them, being the wonderful precocity of those times. At seven years of age, her father shall have aid of his tenants to marry her; at nine, she is able to deserve and have dower; at twelve, to consent to marriage; at fourteen, to be hors du gard; at sixteen, to be past the Lord's tender of a husband (that is, free to choose for herself, and not obliged to take a husband of his choosing), also free to enter into the enjoyment of her own lands, if the Lord, for covetousness did not marry her at fourteen; at twenty-one, she is able to make a feoffment. But mark well this clause: if she misbehaves herself in any light way, while still a ward, she is to be deprived of her heritage, and her portion is to go to her parceners.

At the age of fourteen a woman was held to be marriageable, because able to "order and dispose, to have the key clog at her girdle, and to be a jolly stay to a man;" which was beginning early enough, in all conscience! But yet another reason for these early marriages was that, if married, "her husband for her shall do knight's service" if he is above age; if he is still under age, she is still in ward. But the black-letter lawyer is very warm on this

* The Lawes Resolutions of Woman's Rights, or the Lawes Provision for Women. Printed by the Assignment of John More, Esquire. 1632.

point, and thinks a woman should be out of ward for all her husband's nonage; holding it a "mischievous, inconvenient, unjust, and unnatural law" that should hold a woman from her husband and her inheritance when without offence of law married, because her husband, say of nineteen, was not fully fit for all manner of horsemanship. "Be not therefore, good woman, absterred from a young husband by old natura brevium," he says encouragingly.

Another curious instance of the precocity of the times is the fact that from the age of twelve "a woman" was supposed able to work, and fit for duty. "By a statute made 5 Eliz. ca. iv., Two justices of peace in the Countrie, or the head officer and 2 Burgesses in Cities, &c., may appoint any woman of the age of twelve yeares, and under forty, being unmarried and out of service, to serve and bee retained by yeare, weeke, or day, in such sort and for such wages as they shall think meet, and if she refuse they may commit her to prison till she shall be bound to serve."

The various methods of dividing a female inheritance were odd, but the oddest of all was that "wherein, after partition made of the lands, every part being written in a scroule and lapped in a bale of wax, is put into a bonnet, which must be holden by some indifferent body, and then (as wee use to choose valintines) every partner pulleth out a part, the first borne first, the rest after her in degree of ancientry, and every one shall hold to her chance." Another mode was by "hotch-pot," which is putting all the lands and holdings together, whether given in frank marriage or left in heritage, and then dividing according to a certain fixed valuation.

In those old days, betrothal was a more serious matter than it is now—something like the present German betrothal. It was considered the "first part of marriage," and was of two kinds—the first, plain and simple, the two only binding themselves to contract matrimony hereafter; the second, when an oath was made, or something taken as an earnest or pledge on both sides, which pledge or gifts must be returned in case of no marriage.

Going on to the question of the time to be allowed to elapse between promise and fulfilment, our lawyer says that a woman may marry some one else as soon as she likes after the stated period of betrothment has passed; after two years, if her betrothment has been made without specified term, and if both she and her spouse reside in the same province; after three years, if her spouse reside in another province. A judge might prolong the period of expectancy if he would. The time of waiting before choosing another husband, if already married and deserted, was longer. "In marriage because it is in some sort dangerous to expect long the incertaine returne of an absent yoake fellow, the civil law did ordaine that aftir a husband had been gone five yeares, and nothing knowne whether he lived or no, his wife may marry again;" and so the husband if his wife had deserted him. But the common law simply commands to forbear marriage until the death of the missing one is really known. There is still the feeling abroad among the people that a woman who has not heard of her husband for five or seven years is entitled to choose another, and that her marriage with the first is null and void even should he return.

"I am affraid my feminine acquaintance will say I writ as I live. I talke much of marriage, but I came not forward: stay awhile yet, I pray you. I know many an honest woman more repenting her hastie marriage ere she was wooed, than all the other sinnes that ever she committed. It were good nature we speak a little of wooing, but to handle that matter per genus et species would take up as much roome as an Indian figge-tree, every thrid whereof when it falleth to the ground groweth to a woof." The gloves and rings, and other pre-nuptial gifts, spoken of before, must be returned in case of rupture of betrothal bonds; but a woman had more favour from the law in this regard than had the man in the donation of lands, on account of marriage. For, whatever he gave to her, she kept, marriage or none; and whatever she gave to him, she took back. And the reason was, because of the knaves abroad, who "with colour of love and collocution of marriage, cozened heiresses and poor women of their grounds, and gave them the boots when they had done, carrying the gain to their better beloved."

It is curious to mark in this old book the parrot cry of the "good old times." "It was, as I suppose, more frequent in the old time that men gave lands with their daughters in marriage than at this day," says our lawyer, when plunging into the awful labyrinth of frank marriage, dower, seisin, &c.: a labyrinth impossible for one not specially trained to thread. But one thing we can pick out, concerning "the courtesy of England." The courtesy of

England is the law by which a man holds the lands of his wife after her death if she has borne him a child that cried. By some lawyers it was affirmed that he "might be inforced to prove that the Childe sent forth some voyce or cry arguing life and naturall humanity; for if it bellowed, bleated, brayed, grunted, rored, or howled, there accrued no courtesie from the birth of such an uncivill urchin."

As for dower, our old friend has not much regard to that. "I could never heare of any woman that needed buy new bootes to ride a wooing," he says, and he repudiates the notion that "English men were so dainty and coye they must be inticed, or our women so unamiable that unlesse it were by purchase they would have no husbandes." Then he goes on to a consideration of what the dower is, and what seisin is requisite in a husband, &c., until he comes to the "endowment at the church doore nowe a dayes seldom in use," when a man seized in fee simple and of full age, coming to the church door to be married, did there "affirm, affiance, and endow his spouse of all his lands, or of part or of half as he listed," which endowment held good after his death, and enabled his widow to enter into her dower without assignment.

The end of the first part of this old book is very characteristic. "I have held young maides now indeed somewhat long in the old endowments, and I would proceed to instruct them in the dower of the new learning jointures, I meane, for my desire is, that they should be able to have when they are widdowes a coach or at the least an ambler, and some money in their purses. But they are of the minde for themselves, I perceive, that Themistocles was in for his daughter, he desired a man rather without money than money without a man; here is a wise advice yee say; I tell you of the Dower, of the Widdowes Estate, and God knowes whether ye shal ever have the grace to be widdowes or no, you would know what belongeth to wives, or there in a good way. I have brought you to the church door, if ye be not shortly well married I pray God I may."

A woman, as soon as she is married, is, as it were, veiled, clouded, overshadowed; and continually under the power of her husband. Bracton terms her under the sceptre of her husband; her new self is her superior, her companion her master. The mastership she has fallen into may be called "leonina societate," and she must take the name of her husband. "Alice Greene becommeth Alice Musgrave; shee that in the morning was Faireweather, is at night perhaps Rainebow or Goodwife Foule, Sweetheart going to church, and Hoistbrick comming home." The rest follows. "Justin Brooke affermeth plainly that if a man beat an outlaw, a traitor, a Pagan, his villein, or his wife, it is dispunishable, because of the law common these persons can have no action. God send gentlewomen better sport or better companie."

However, the law took the case of the beaten gentlewomen to heart, and it was ordained that if a wife was threatened by her husband to be beaten, "mischieved," or slain, she might sue out of chancery to compel him to find surety of honest behaviour towards her; and that he do her no worse bodily damage than belonged to his office of a husband for lawful and reasonable correction.

"But the prerogative of the husband is best discerned in his dominion over all externe things in which the wife by combination divesteth herself of proprietie (property) in some sort, and reflects it upon her governour; for if the man have right and title to enter into lands, and the tenant enfeoffe the baron and feme, the wife taketh nothing. The very goods which a man giveth to his wife are still his own; her chains, her bracelets, her apparell, are all the good man's goods. A wife, how gallant soever she be, glistereth but in the riches of her husband, as the morne hath no light, but it is the sunnes. Yea, and her Phœbe borroweth sometime her own proper light from Phœbus."

Of one thing must a wife be careful if she wishes to save her dower. She may cut her husband's throat, and it is no forfeiture of dower; neither if she refrains to visit him when sick and wounded in a foreign shire; but if she elopes, she forfeits her dower. "Elopement, by the sound and quality of the offence, might seeme to be derived from alopex, a foxe, for it is when a woman seekes her prey farre from home, which is the foxe's quality." There was a question of the dower of Anne, who,

> Frankly of her own accord,
> Left her husband and her lord,
> And to Bednall Greene she ran,
> With Mathew Rochlie, gentleman.

But whether the lady got her dower after her misbehaviour is not clear.

And here again the old lawyer comes out as the champion of equality, in even stronger form than is allowed at the present day. "Methinks," he says, "here wanteth

equality of the law, women goe doune still, and many graines allowance will not make the ballance hang even. A poor woman shall have but the third part of her husband's lands when he is dead, for all the service she did him when during the accouplement (perhaps a long time and a tedious), and if she be extravagant with a friend—as dame Anne—that is an elopement, and a forfeiture, &c. But as the saying is, men are happy by the masse, they may goe where they list I warrant ye, and because they are enforced to travel in the world they will pay dear abroad for that which they esteem of no value at home. They may lope over ditch and dale, a thousand out-ridings and out-biddings is no forfeiture, but as soon as the good wife is gone the bad man will have her land, not the third, but every foot of it."

A husband having a notable grudge against his wife had but to embark in some treasonable enterprise to cheat her of her dower. It was supposed that by attainting wife and children, men, who would not refrain from crimes for themselves, would refrain for the sake of those near and dear to them; but experience does not show that the family instinct has always been strong enough to restrain from acts of felony; and indeed, as has been just quoted, when a man hated his wife, and wished to deprive her of her dower, it was as good a way as any. And as no woman must betray her husband, she had to stand by and see the mischief go on unhindered, and her dower lost for her husband's folly.

A widow is likened to a four-legged beast which falls in halves, the one half stark dead, the other half standing still upright; "senting, seeing, feeling, gazing, and wonderfully astonished;" also to an elephant which hath lost its head. But there is comfort for the headless elephant. From having been so long in subjection, and under the rule of another, she is now free and in liberty, and with power to enjoy her own. And then come instructions how she is to proceed as administrator, taking care among other things that she take not excessive apparel, and demands nothing she may not have.

One more extract and we have done. This time it refers to a widow's marrying again, and it is such a picture that it might have been written in the Spectator in one of Addison's happiest veins.

"The widdowe married again to her owne great liking, though not with applause of most friends and acquaintances. But alas what would they have her to have done; she was faire, young, rich, gracious in her carriage, and so well became her mourning apparrel, that when she went to church on Sundayes, the casements opened of their owne accord on both sides the streets, that bachelours and widdowers might behold her. Her man at home kissed her pantables and served diligently; her late husband's physitian came and visited her often; the lawyer to whom she went to for councell took opportunity to advise for himself; if she went to any feast there was ever one guest, sometimes two or three, the more for her sake; if she were at home, suitors overtook one another, and sometimes the first commer would answer the next that she was not within. All day she was troubled with answering petitions. And at night, when she would go to rest, her maid Marion was become a mistress of requests and humble supplications. This kind of life the widdowe liked not; I aske again what she would have done; he to whom she gave a denial would not take it; if she denied him twice hee said two negatives made an affirmative, and hee challenged promise; therefore to set men's heart and her own at rest, shee chose amongst them not one of the long robe, not a man macerate and dryed up with study, but a gallant gulburd lad, that might well be worthy of her, had he beene as thrifty, as kind hearted, or half so wise, as hardy and adventurous. This youth within less than a yeare had set the nuncios his predecessor kept in prison at liberty round about the country, the bags were all empty, the plate was all at pawne, all to keep the square bones in their amble, and to relieve companions; one of which, notwithstanding, that had cost him many a pound for none other quarrell but vous mentes, challenged him one day into the field, which was appointed, and there my new married man was slaine. Now his wife will bring her appeale."

Since the year 1622, when this curious black-letter book was published, what a change! No longer content with the declaration that they have no voice in parliament, that they make no laws, consent to none, interpret none, and abrogate none, women are now buzzing about the ears of revising barristers, trying by any methods practicable to step into the crowd of voters qualified to send members to parliament. Times change, and we change with them. In olden days, a woman was nothing if not a wife. She derived all her honour from her husband, who might chastise her

at his goodwill if she failed to do him pleasure, and who held her as sent into existence simply and solely for his pleasure. She was his wife, the care-taker of his house, and the mother of his children; yet she was nothing for or in herself, and her whole duty lay in administering to him, as all her honour came from him. Now, she is individual, and an independent worker almost the same as man himself. She makes her own living and she hews out her own fortune; she lives for fame, and builds up her artistic and literary reputation with as much toil and pains as man. But though the laws which once pressed so heavily on her are considerably lightened, and her disabilities much modified, yet she has griefs of which she complains to the public loudly, and which she is making desperate efforts to induce a masculine and perverse generation to redress. Whether she will succeed or no, rests, with other mysteries of the future, in the lap of time. The great danger in the woman question now, is, that the women and their partisans will go too far, and create a reaction towards injustice by the exaggeration of their demands.

POTTERY FOR FLOWERS.

The lady of taste, as she arranges her freshly gathered flowers, little considers the pains which have been bestowed in fabricating the vessels she adorns. The vase, or cup, or tazza, be it of Dresden, Bow, Chelsea, or Derby porcelain, or of Wedgwood ware, has passed through many workmen's hands; and its form, if beautiful, and its decoration, if in keeping and good taste, have sprung necessarily from the conception of some true artist.

Much as Wedgwood did for art in this direction, and many beautiful vessels as he perfected for bulbous roots, plants, and flowers, he left open a wide and comparatively exhaustless field to future artists, and one to which, as yet, they have contributed little that is good. Were a few fine forms perfected by some potter of high ability, and then reproduced in a cheaper manner and material—so cheap as to become popularised, even to the extent of being hawked about, or set along the kerbstones in the cheap markets—a practical lesson in taste would be given to that wide class which so much needs an indirect culture of this character.

It is to the workers in terra-cotta that we must look for so much that is needed in the improvement of floral pottery. The beautiful unglazed wares they produce are just those which befit natural forms that derive their exquisite effects from gloss and colour. Black, a blue-black, several shades of buff, and a rich tawny red, are, without much chemical art, easily produced by the mere processes of the kiln, and were the colours used in endless variation and intermixture by the ancient potters. Some of their finest work was in a blue-black body; they favoured buff in its many shades, and that dark red, which is not only a primary colour, but one of the most exquisite in nature. It relieves every other colour, and is an effect in itself. The ancients loved and used it thus; often without a single relief or addition, and, with nothing but some fine geometrical outline in view, threw off productions which have never been excelled, or even approached, in modern times. Still more largely they used this colour as a pigment; and the greatest number of the finest antique vases which have descended to our time are black, painted with figures in this tawny red.

The observations of travellers, the analyses of chemists, and geological surveys, have elicited no facts which show that the ancients possessed other or better clays than those existing in this country in unrivalled abundance. Mr. Blackfield, a high authority on these points, says distinctly in a paper read before the Northamptonshire and Lincoln Architectural Societies, "There is no country in the world in which there are finer materials for pottery than exist in England;" our modellers have the same geometrical principles to refer to as had the Greeks, whose finest forms were but sections of the cone; and they have open to them the best examples of oriental colour and unconventional ornament. Every chemical, scientific, and mechanical process has made immense advance, and all that is wanted for this great and very much needed education of the popular taste is, that some few master potters, of superior judgment and skill, should supply the market with cheap, yet good, copies of a few fine examples in such sections of floral pottery as suspending vases for plants of the orchideæ species, pots for bulbs, and baskets and vases for ordinary plants and flowers. At first it might be that people so long accustomed to see nothing but the barbarisms begot by cupidity and ignorance combined, would prefer to purchase what was hideous for fourpence rather than what was beautiful for sixpence; but, happily, the human eye has a natural aptitude to seek out and select what is beautiful, and hence the process of initiation and culture would not be tedious. A real beginning would be thus made, and the taste for floriculture, which is spreading in London and the large cities, would be aided by culture of another kind.

The articles prepared by the modern potter, for the floral science of the wealthier classes, sin in the same direction of inappropriateness and inelegance. The shop windows of the dealers are filled with highly glazed, gaudy coloured, tub-like pots and square boxes; and, as choicer specimens for cut flowers, with ill-designed figures bearing cornucopias, or the semblance of a lady's ringed hand and wrist, holding a cup in the shape of a Scotchman's mull! This last is an excrescence which sins alike against good taste and feeling; for who would cut off a lady's hand even for the sake of holding the flowers of Proserpine? This is imitating nature

with a vengeance; and only shows the vagaries to which the uncultivated workman will resort for the purpose of mere novelty. Compare such an object with some simple vase in fine dark red or buff terra-cotta, its form elliptical, if for cut flowers, and less elongated if for bulbous or growing plants. Its subdued tone of colour, throws back, as it were, nature's more brilliant hues, and its conventional ornament, if ornament there need be, contrasts fitly with the exuberance and infinite variety of Nature's outlines.

Apart from the facts, that the same geometrical principles and the same materials are as open to the modern as to the ancient potter, we greatly question if mere servile copies of antique specimens would ever suit the chief purposes of modern art, particularly that part of it which lends aid to floral decoration. The larger portion of the ancient fictilia which has descended to our time was fabricated for funeral purposes, and, with this object in view, its forms were severe and its tones of colour subdued. There is also much reason to think that the taste for flowers was rather an expression of their poets, so far as it went, than a fact of daily life. Floriculture is almost a modern taste, engrafted on the old Teutonic predilection for the open country and its products; and, therefore, it is with this newness of facts and ideas that the artistic potter has to deal. He must use and adopt the old outlines and their variations, because they are elementary in form; but he will vitalise these to the necessary purposes in view, if he be a true artist. He will avoid highly glazed surfaces and gaudy colouring, except minutely and in the way of ornament; and once having conceived the work he has to do, as a whole, he will trust to taste, and to spontaneous feeling, for that which he will express in ornament, whatever be its amount or kind. It was this method which enabled the Lombardian workers in terra-cotta to give to their productions the force and character of a fine art.

In this country, as on the Continent, the workers in these cheap, yet fine materials, are gaining ground every day. The English, taking the side of utility, as they ever do, excel in architectural ornaments and adjuncts; the Neapolitans in statuettes of a pale red colour; the Swiss make red terra-cotta flower-vases, and were the first to introduce red suspending vases. In Germany are many manufactories of terra-cotta, where ornamental articles in red and buff are made; and in Belgium and Holland porous biscuit vessels and ornaments in red ware are common, particularly flower-vases. The French likewise excel in terra-cotta; and some of the largest and most magnificent works of a sculptured class have been produced at Toulouse, as also architectural ornaments of a buff colour, and many fine imitations of Etruscan works. Exceedingly beautiful models of statuettes in buff and red terra-cottas are also made in France; and many of these are so well proportioned and perfect as to serve as models in public schools of art.

Ornamental works of the highest character are produced in England, but owing to the want of what we may call a better dispersive machinery, they are comparatively unknown, and not easily seen or procured. It is one thing to make a fine set of vases for the lawns and terraces of Windsor Castle, Burleigh House, or Trentham Hall; and another to reproduce them in a smaller and cheaper form for the multitude. Yet important and honourable as the one commission is to the manufacturer, the other is far more so, not only so far as profit goes, but in a national and artistic point of view. Art must be infiltrated unconsciously, as it were, into the home life of the people, and to effect this he must do what Wedgwood did a hundred years ago, build up fine art on useful art and make the flower-pots, vases, and little ornaments for humble homes, pay by their large and ready sale for the cost in modelling the fine bas-relief and life-like bust. What seems essential to this is a better dispersive machinery. It ought to be seen by dealers that pottery must be brought to men's doors, or nearly so, if it is to sell. People will not go far out of their way to seek things in good taste. Good pottery must stand forth in the markets if it is to meet the eye of the multitude. The "missis" on her Saturday night's peregrinations, "father" on his way home from the "shop," Smith or Brown in search of some present for his "young woman," with a sixpence or may be a shilling to spare, will not enter shops to make inquiries. The very number and prettiness of the goods scare them, to say nothing of that chronic bashfulness which belongs to the more respectable of their class when not "cleaned up" or in their best attire. But they can chaffer with the keeper of the street stall. And if the eye has been attracted, a purchase is sure to follow.

It may be hoped, that when Covent Garden is rebuilt on a wider area, and the growing wants of the metropolitan and suburban districts are met by good and well-constructed markets, provision will be made for this indirect culture of the taste and refinement of the great masses. If they can buy a plant, or a few sweet flowers for a penny, let there also be in a near neighbourhood, the cheap yet elegant vessel wherein to place them. And if dealers of a better class would take this question up in an enlightened spirit, and not, as now, burden the markets with the refuse goods only of the Staffordshire potteries—but import from abroad—from Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, and Holland, those cheap and beautiful forms which mark many of the ordinary branches of the potter's art in those countries, such as statuettes, vases, hanging baskets, salt cellars, tea and coffee services, jugs, and other useful and ornamental, yet cheap and simple goods, a boon scarcely to be over estimated would be conferred on all classes of society, for it would vitalise the truths of art through the acceptance of the people. It would allow comparison to be made between the fabrics of different coun-

tries; it would pay, for the margin of profit on ordinary goods in clay is a wide one, and it would lessen our insular self-love by showing us that other nations excel us in taste, and are our rivals in working out the modern necessity of the union of utility with beauty.

PLAYING WITH LIGHTNING.

How many years it is since we first made the acquaintance of the Royal Polytechnic Institution, we should hardly care to say; how many years had passed without our having visited it until this present month of May, we almost forget. So many years that, as we made our way to it the other day, we had strong doubts whether our recollections of it would turn out correct, or whether it had undergone the surprising change that seems to come over everything that one has not happened to see since boyhood.

We recollect always having had our doubts, in our extreme youth, about the Polytechnic. There was an indefinable feeling as if it were not a real, out-and-out, holiday place: as if our education were in some way going on whenever we were there. Instruction, we felt, lurked behind amusement, and it was impossible to forecast, from the programme of the entertainments, exactly at what point the baleful genius of mental improvement might be expected to claim its victim. There were diverting objects to look at, doubtless, but even machinery in motion—a charming object always to any boy of a well-regulated mind—can be turned to an evil educational account. A flavour of chemicals also pervaded the building, and suggested unpleasant instructive references to hydrogen, oxygen, and other gases, satisfactory enough when combined in experiments concluding pleasantly with a bang or a flash of fire, but evil to hear about in an hour's lecture.

There were suggestive whirring straps and wheels in the entrance hall in those days, inspiring delusive hopes as to the quantity of moving machinery above. The first view of the hall itself was very pleasing. A large raised basin, or tank, filled the centre of the floor, and on its limpid waters floated absolutely maddening models of ships, steamers, life-boats, and other vessels which we felt we would have given worlds to possess. Lighthouses, piers, and docks, rose at intervals around this delightful harbour, and two or three small cork sailors, illustrative of the superior merits of somebody's life-belts, floated, smiling and blue-jacketed, on its serene surface. A railway ran along the side of the tank, and its terminus at the far end was flanked by a deep green pool, into which the diving-bell, mysterious engine, was let down, full of adventurous spirits, who invariably returned to the upper air flushed and sheepish. From this pool, too, would emerge the diver, clad in that tremendous costume, specially invented, as we then supposed, expressly for our discomfiture, and after mysteriously rapping his helmet with a couple of halfpence just fished up from the bottom, would sink back into the water, a goggle-eyed monster. Twice in our very early youth we recollect arousing the echoes of the neighbourhood with our shrieks at this alarming spectacle; once it was even found necessary to bear us with ignominy into Regent-street. It was long before we could feel at all comfortable in that tremendous presence.

Much more to our taste was the glass-blowing stall, whereon were exhibited ships, long-tailed birds, and other desirable objects. At these art-treasures we were never tired of gazing. The glass cases around the walls, on the other hand, we usually thought it well to avoid, as containing not unfrequent educational pitfalls, too readily lending themselves to cross-questioning. The very lectures themselves, as we remembered them, were doubtful. The darkened room for dissolving views, magic lanterns, and similar entertainments, was undoubtedly pleasant, and favourable to secret scrimmages with our friends, by reason of the difficulty of ultimate detection; but even here useful knowledge was always lying in wait for us.

On the present occasion we are in search of useful knowledge, and have only time for a hasty glance at the general contents of the building; but it presently strikes us very forcibly that if the boys of this day are at all like the boys of our day, they must find it just a little dull at the Polytechnic.

The long basin, we find, has disappeared, ships, lighthouses, sailors, and all, except at the diver's end, and there is still the cool, green pool. The diving-bell still hangs in its old place; a man leans against a pillar hard by, polishing the diver's helmet. Can he be the diver himself? He looks low-spirited, as a man might be expected to look who has much to do with such a costume. Our friend the glass-blower has moved from the gallery where

he (or was it his grandfather?) used to turn out the birds with feathery tails, and has a front place on the floor. We liked him better where he was; it was a quieter place, a good place to retire to when it was considered advisable to avoid temporarily the observation of our elders. The wheel of life—it was called something else when we knew it first, years back, and before it was brought out as a great novelty a few months ago—still spins round in the gallery; there is a sample vase of wax fruit that seems like an old familiar friend. One side of the gallery is ornamented with sectional views of geological strata, surmounted in each case by an appropriate landscape. The boys have a bad time of it in this gallery; as we pass by, fragments of geological information, more or less (generally more) inaccurate, are borne upon the air; blue lias, London clay, and old red sandstone are on active service.

The glass cases along the other gallery are filled with a most heterogeneous mixture of goods. Why Miss Blank should have presented the Institution with her false teeth, not to say gums, it is difficult to make out; and although a wood bracket, "carved, by permission, by a footman in service during his leisure moments when the family are dining out" (he seems to have had no leisure moments but under these circumstances), is highly creditable to its author, it can scarcely be considered either remarkable or diverting. Turning from objects such as these, there is on view a collection of busts of a very appalling nature: one, in a wig, presumably that of the late Lord Brougham, being unspeakably tremendous; but candour compels the admission that outside the lecture-rooms, at all events, there is not much more amusement than in the old days, perhaps even not quite so much. The bazaar element is decidedly stronger than of yore, and it may be delicately hinted that the ladies who preside at the stalls are somewhat pertinacious in their efforts to do business. And it cannot with truth be said that the objects for sale possess any particular attraction, being, indeed, for the most part, of a rather uninteresting and unsatisfactory sort.

But our business is not with patent cement, or novel processes in photography, or feeble little "specimens." We have a more important matter on hand.

Our classical reminiscences have left us with the conviction that, when Vulcan forged the bolts of Jove, the scene must have been, as the graphic reporter has it, "one of terrific grandeur." We pictured to ourselves the lame god and his Cyclopean assistants, hammering and forging the celestial weapons in some flaming cavern of Etna or Vesuvius, amid an eternal din like that of a chain-cable factory crossed with a rolling-mill. Lurid smoke rolls heavily upward through the fiery air; the molten lava rushes forth on its work of destruction; while the lightnings, that now and again play round the top of the groaning mountain, proclaim to a trembling world the tremendous nature of the operations going on below.

Although we had inspected electrical machines, and had looked as scientific as possible at the sparks we had seen elicited from them, the grand and heroic idea of lightning-making had never left us. Consequently, when we were told that lightning was made and exhibited at certain stated hours, in the unromantic district of Regent-street, we received the statement with some incredulity; and it was to test its truth that, after many years, we came to revisit the Polytechnic. Let us endeavour to give some account of what we learn from the lucid and interesting lecture, which explained to us the extraordinary performances of the great Induction Coil.

It was discovered by Faraday, many years ago, that a coil of wire, wound loosely round a magnet, became actively electric at the moment when the magnet was either placed within its folds or withdrawn from them, and also that a galvanic current, in passing round a conducting circuit, produces an "induced" current in another conductor that surrounds the first. A galvanic current is usually generated by what is called a galvanic battery, consisting of two dissimilar metals or other substances, technically named elements, not touching each other, but immersed in some acid fluid. Chemical action is excited, and electricity, in the form known as galvanism, is set free. If the elements are connected together, outside the acid, by a piece of wire, or any other conductor, the electricity will proceed from one element, called the positive pole of the battery, and will pass along the wire to the other or negative pole, thus making what is called a circuit. If the wire be interrupted, the electricity, if present in sufficient quantity, will leap across the gap in the form of a visible spark. If the gap be filled by any substance capable of being chemically decomposed by electricity, the decomposition will take place. In all this we have only the galvanic bat-

tery, and the primary current directly proceeding from it.

Now, Faraday's discovery was, that this galvanic or primary current, at the moment when it begins to flow, and again at the moment when it ceases to flow, produces a secondary or induced, and perfectly independent current, in another conductor wound around the first, but not in contact with it. At the moment when the primary current begins to flow, the induced current passes in the same direction with it; but at the moment when the primary current ceases to flow, the induced current passes in the opposite direction. Instead of being, as in the primary current, continuous, the induced current is only momentary; and, in order to produce it at pleasure, it is necessary to have some contrivance by which to cut off and to restore the primary current as often as may be desired. As often as it is cut off, the reverse induced current passes; as often as it is restored, the direct induced current passes. The instrument used for this purpose is called a break, or contact breaker. It is placed in a gap in the primary or galvanic circuit, communicating with one extremity of the gap, and capable of being made to touch the other extremity also. When it touches, it is said to "make" contact, and, when it ceases to touch, it "breaks" contact.

Not only does the magnet, like the primary current, induce electricity, but a piece of soft iron is rendered magnetic during the passage of a primary current through a coil of wire surrounding it. If the iron be massive, it retains its magnetic quality for a few moments after the galvanic current ceases; but, if it be of small bulk, it gives up its magnetism immediately.

In the manufacture of a "coil" for the display of induced electricity, all the foregoing facts are taken into account. The centre, or core, of the coil is formed of a bundle of soft iron wire. Around this is wound the wire for the primary current, and around this again the wire for the secondary current. When the ends of the primary wire are connected with the two poles of a galvanic battery, the core of iron wires becomes a core of magnets, and hence assists the primary current in inducing electricity in the secondary wire. When the ends of the primary wire are disconnected from the battery the core ceases to be magnetic, and the withdrawal of the magnet assists the cessation of the primary current in again inducing electricity in the secondary wire.

The largest induction coils hitherto made have been about a foot or fifteen inches in length, by about four inches in diameter. Seven miles has been about the extreme limit of length of the secondary wire; and nine inches the greatest length of spark that could be obtained. With these figures as standards of comparison, we approach the "monster coil" now under consideration.

In this, the central core of iron wires is composed of pieces each five feet long, and the thickness of knitting needles, the whole core being five inches in diameter. The primary wire is of copper, thirty-seven hundred and seventy yards in length. The secondary wire is also of copper, and is one hundred and fifty miles in length. The rods of the core are separated from one another, or insulated, by being wound round with cotton, and the primary wire is covered in a similar manner. The secondary wire is covered with silk; and all these coverings are required in order to force the current to keep within each wire, or to pass along its length, instead of escaping from it laterally to contiguous turns of the spiral. The whole apparatus is enclosed within cylinders of vulcanite, and is mounted on strong supports, themselves similarly covered. The ends of the secondary wire issue one from each extremity of the coil, and are connected to "terminals," one of which is a point, and the other a polished disc of metal. They stand on movable columns in front of the coil; and the wires, when necessary, can be detached from the terminals, and attached to any other apparatus that may be required. When the primary wire is connected with a powerful galvanic battery, and contact is made, the core becomes a bundle of magnets, and this bundle combines with the primary wire to induce an electric current in the secondary wire. When contact is broken, the primary current ceases to flow, the core loses its magnetism, and an electric current is again induced in the secondary wire. If the terminals be not too far apart, this induced current leaps across the space between them in the form of a visible spark or flash.

There is yet another piece of subsidiary apparatus, called the condenser. This consists of a number of small sheets of insulated tinfoil, connected together, and with the primary wire, to which they form a sort of loop circuit. The condenser is supposed to afford a safety-valve, or reservoir of space for the primary current, and a security against any injury being done to the

primary wire by the sudden rushing into it of a stream of electricity.

The first endeavours to work the new coil were frustrated by its own powers of destruction. It melted the platinum, and burnt up the brass of the original contact breaker. When used with a small amount of condenser surface, it burst the primary wire into fragments, and escaped from it laterally. When these difficulties were overcome, and the whole apparatus was in order, it afforded a spark, or rather a flash of lightning, twenty-nine inches in length, and apparently about a third of an inch in width. The length was measured, of course, by the distance between the terminals, and when this exceeded twenty-nine inches, no distinct flash was given. For a distance within its power to cross, it would almost seem that the electricity, like a strong leaper, makes an effort proportionate to the resistance to be overcome. When the terminals are distant, but still within the twenty-nine inch limit, the flash strikes upon the disc with a heavy shock and a loud report. When they are near together, or within two or three inches, the flash gushes forth without noise, and lazily, like a spurt of molten metal, or of dense flame; and from this "flaming spark," as it is called, the flaming portion can be blown aside by bellows, leaving the actual course of the electricity distinctly visible. Either the flaming spark or the longer one will perforate considerable thicknesses of glass, and five inches of solid plate glass have already been pierced by it. At one visit we chanced to see a remarkable illustration of the way in which metallic surfaces may serve to attract lightning. The outer covering of the coil displays the name and address of Mr. Apps, its maker, in gold letters of considerable size. In taking a long spark, the stands that support the terminals were placed nearer to the coil than usual; and the attraction of these gold-leaf surfaces was sufficient to divert the spark from its course, and visibly to break it up into portions. In the darkened theatre at the Polytechnic, the long flash lights up the room and the audience with the peculiar lurid glare so well known as an effect of brilliant lightning at night, and displays the features and action of every one present. But it is curious to note that, the flash being of instantaneous duration only, it allows no *motion* to be seen. We should think, if guided by our consciousness alone, that the flash lasted an appreciable time; but this would be an error, due to the persistence of the impression on the eye, after the flash itself had ceased. If the room be made perfectly dark, and if the spectators all raise their arms and wave their hands to and fro as quickly as they can, the flash will display the position of the arms, but not the movements of the hands. *While the flash lasts, the hand has no time to move*, and is consequently seen, as if motionless, in the position in which the flash finds it. It is in contemplation to exhibit the same effect in a more complete way by affixing a picture to a revolving disc. When the disc revolves so rapidly that no outlines of the picture can be distinguished by means of any ordinary light, they will be perfectly seen in a darkened room by the light of the flash. It lasts so short a time, that the revolving disc does not change its position in the brief period.

It is the smallest part of the advantage expected from the new coil, that it allows all the luminous and all the destructive phenomena of chamber electricity to be exhibited, in hitherto unapproached beauty and intensity. Men of science anticipate from it new discoveries of high importance. In the intervals between the public exhibitions of artificial lightning, the effects of the coil are being closely studied by those who are best able to appreciate them; and we believe no long time will be required in order to prove that Mr. Pepper, in his ever zealous catering for the entertainment and instruction of his especial public, has laid the foundation of real and solid scientific progress.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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